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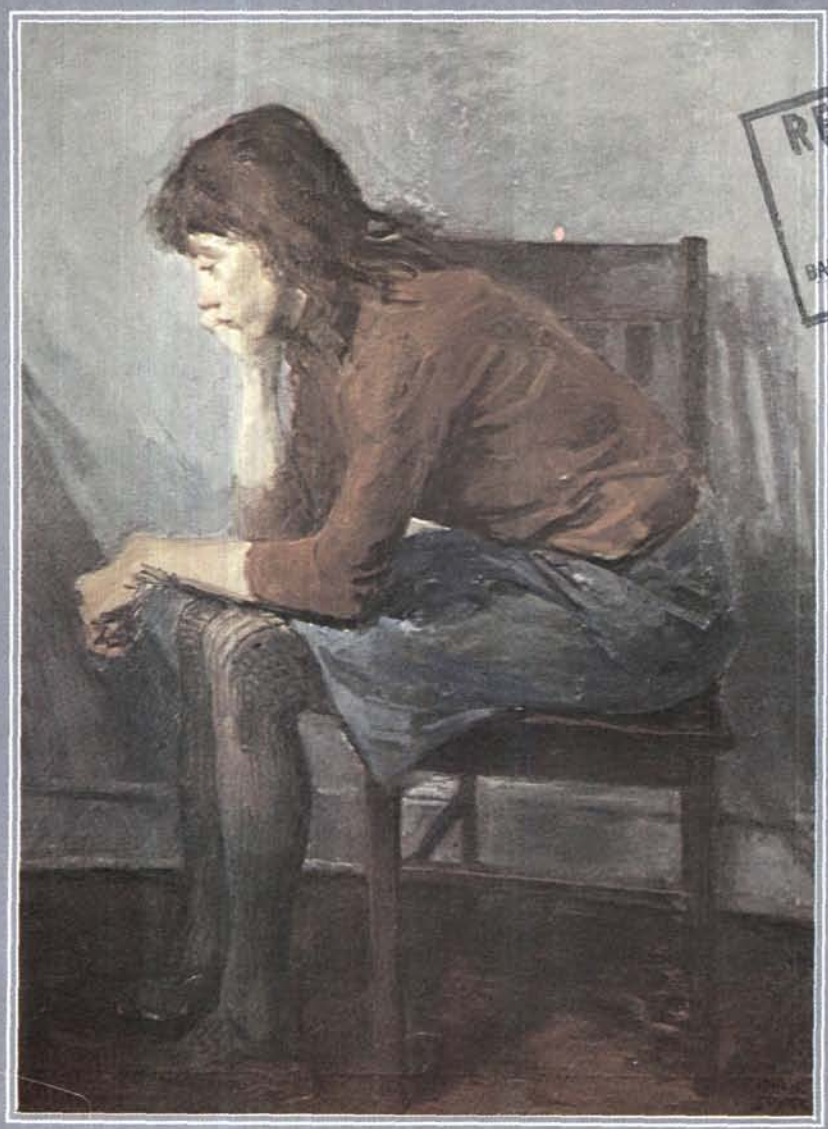

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Why Are Women Blue?—*Maggie Scarf*

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TRB

from Washington
July 5 & 12, 1980

The Tompkins Factor

There'll be a new candidate shortly for the Daniel D. Tompkins Club. That's the club, you remember, whose roll includes such American vice presidents as Richard M. Johnson (who served with Van Buren), Henry Wilson (Grant), William A. Wheeler (Hayes), and Garret A. Hobart (McKinley). Daniel D. Tompkins was second under President Monroe. They stood a heartbeat away from power but the heart continued to beat. Now, in 1980, Republican candidate Ronald Reagan is again scouting around; he has yet to pick his running mate but is dangling the bait before various groups in traditional fashion.

Forty years ago historian Louis Hatch wrote, in his account of the office, "It is difficult to find even one Vice Presidential nomination that was not made primarily from the standpoint of its utility in carrying a doubtful state or region, or in satisfying a disgruntled faction in the party."

No position in government has been ridiculed so regularly as the vice presidency, the afterthought of the founding fathers. In the musical, "Of Thee I Sing," there was the guileless Throttlebottom, roaming Washington, trying to find somebody who recognized him. Some vice presidents became famous, of course, when they fulfilled their gloomy institutional purpose and entered history. Some of these were duds, some giants: among them were Theodore Roosevelt, Calvin Coolidge, Harry Truman, and Lyndon Johnson. What is surprising is how good some of them were, considering their random selection. (You wonder what kind of leader Daniel D. Tompkins would have been had fate touched him. Would they have called it the Tompkins Doctrine instead of the Monroe Doctrine?)

I must be careful what I write about this. In 1976 when I completed my semi-obligatory quadrennial story about haphazard vice presidential selection, I made light of one Henry Wilson who was General Grant's second term vice president (you will identify his first vice president, of course, as Schuyler Colfax). I hinted that Wilson had sunk out of sight. A graciously chiding letter came from Wilson Junior High School in Natick, Massachusetts—named after Wilson. Also named after him, I learned, was a World War II cargo ship. So there. Henry Wilson, it turned out, was not his original name: he was Jeremiah Jones Colbath for his first 21 years. Orphaned, he learned shoemaking in Natick (where a small cobbler shop shrine still stands, said my informant). He helped found the Free Soil party, presided over its national convention in 1852 which nominated John P. Hale (who the deuce was he?), made the transition from Whig to Free Soil to Republican, and was elected to the Senate by the Know Nothing party in 1854. After three Senate terms he became vice president as an afterthought. That's probably all you want to know about Colbath-Wilson.

Sometimes in Washington you clutch at these irrelevancies to preserve balance. There is nothing more incongruous in the way we recruit Daniel D. Tompkinses than in the way we recruit presidents. But 1980 seems a little different. Normally, at this point in the campaign, there is a passionate taking of sides, a whirlwind of enthusiasm and emotion. Instead, this year, there is a kind of apathy, a conversational interest, a wonder at the magnitude of world problems and the men who must try to solve them. Is this doomsday gap wider than usual? We know about Carter, of course. As for Reagan, a process of shaping him seems to be going on before our eyes. It is a kind of plastic surgery undertaken by the Republican establishment. The *Wall Street Journal* has a serious article, "Stop the Battle for Reagan's Soul" (June 16). The *US News & World Report* carries an editorial, "Speak Up, Mr. Reagan" (June 30). They tell him carefully what he should think and do and the amiable candidate seems bent on compliance. Not so much Kemp-Roth, they say; more emphasis on relief for business. When he is elected (as seems likely) there will be time enough to crack down on expensive social programs, name Supreme Court justices, cooperate with a new Republican Senate—a political shift that requires a switch of only nine seats. Then Strom Thurmond will write civil rights legislation, Jesse Helms will look after nutrition, John Tower will make our decisions on military might, and Jake Garn will lead discussion on urban problems. They're all ready to move in as new committee chairmen.

The problems get more complex and scary, and sometimes the incongruities give relief. Teddy Kennedy held a grim hearing the other day on the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs. He wanted to revive a sense of reality in the debate on the US-Soviet nuclear arms race. The world spends $450 billion a year on arms; a spanking, modern one-megaton bomb could inflict 20 times the damage of an outdated Hiroshima bomb (which wiped out a city of 130,000 in the wink of an eye); and Russia and the United States have an arsenal of such weapons aimed at each other. In his agony of testimony a scientist named Dr. H. Jack Geiger explained that insects will be less susceptible to radiation than humans. "The cockroaches will survive and so will the flies and mosquitoes," he explained. That will save a lot of time if nature has to evolve humankind all over again.

Edward Heath, former British prime minister, was over here recently, talking about another, less grisly but enormous, problem: the rising indebtedness of the Less Developed Countries and the possible breakdown of the world financial system if they default. Somehow the problem seems as unreal and abstract as nuclear war, but there the indebtedness is, just like the missiles. Heath is white-haired and stocky, with a lively face straight out of a *Punch* caricature. He was a member, with Willy Brandt, of the committee that drew up *North-South Report—a Program of Survival*, a 304-page paperbound document that is a best seller in Europe but little noticed here. It is a bald recital of maldistribution of global wealth between the have and the have-not countries. War is often thought of in terms of military conflict, it says, but "an equal danger might be chaos . . . mass hunger, economic disaster, environmental catastrophe, and terrorism." It urges birth control—every five days the earth's population increases by one million people. Big problems await the next president, or the next graduate of the Daniel D. Tompkins Club.

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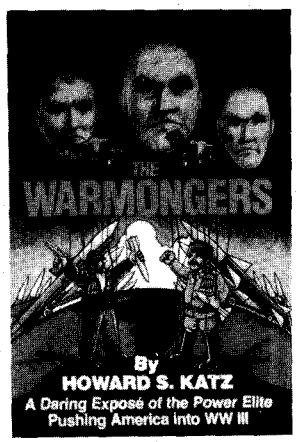

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by Howard S. Katz

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Correspondence

Liability for cancer

To the editors:

Michael Kinsley's call ("Fate and Lawsuits," *TNR*, June 14) for socializing the costs of health care is welcome, as is his concern to eliminate products liability litigation that benefits lawyers more than victims. But his objections to holding manufacturers responsible for the risks of their products are confused. There are different levels of being "at fault." A company may not have been negligent, but it may also have not done every last bit of research or taken every conceivable precaution to prevent avoidable dangers from their products. Not to hold manufacturers strictly liable for injuries caused by their products would remove an important incentive to their discovering means of improving the safety of products, and no one is in a better position than they to make such discoveries. Kinsley's complaint that "the law works as an influence not against irresponsible risks, but against any risks at all" in effect advocates a regression to the days of holding manufacturers liable only for negligence.

Favoring the imposition of strict liability on manufacture is *not* inconsistent with support for socializing health care costs and eliminating litigation that benefits lawyers more than victims. Let the government pay the victims and then fine the manufacturers an amount determined not by the needs of the victim but by the need of society to furnish an incentive for the manufacture of safer products.

Henry Cohen
Columbia, Maryland

To the editors:

For about a year now, I have noticed a trend in your magazine to take a benevolent attitude toward the wrongdoings and shortcomings of big business. It seems to have started about the time that TRB ceased always to command the inside cover and came to be replaced, from time to time, by full-page ads.

Michael Kinsley's article "Fate and Lawsuits" (*TNR*, June 14) would be more appropriate in an insurance journal than in your publication—that is, if you are still more in favor of the individual and individual rights than of protecting large industries from criticism. But the worst part of the story has to do with castigating lawyers for representing their clients effectively and recovering compensation for drug-caused damages. Why cry that those who have not been injured by drugs do not also collect for their cancer, etc.? It is misfortune enough to find that one has a cancerous condition. What is more offensive than to find that cancer has been induced by another's quest for profit?

That lawyers are prompted to bring suits by the expectation of a large fee does not take away from the beneficial purpose these lawyers serve. They are in the vanguard of those who are serving humanity. And their profit comes from having helped someone, not from having sold a product that has caused harm.

David J. Nagle
Greeley, Colorado

To the editors:

Michael Kinsley's article "Fate and Lawsuits" was persuasive in examining the defects of a legal system asked to impose fairness on an unfair world. Surely he could have squeezed in an outline of his proposed solution.

Charles E. Corrigan
Vancouver, Washington

Rhetoric

To the editors:

I was amused by TRB's column "The Planet Savers" in your June 21 issue, dealing in part with Cyrus Vance's abilities as a speaker. Quoth he, "Vance is not a great speaker, but now and then he gets attention for his earnestness and his theme. He begins five separate paragraphs with the same three words: 'without this treaty.'" A few sentences later TRB writes, "He does not use rhetoric. . . ."

The hell he doesn't! According to Aristotle, "rhetoric" is the study of all available means of persuasion. Among the rhetorical devices Aristotle recommended was "anaphora," or the repetition of a key phrase at the beginning of a paragraph—as in those nominating speeches that belabor the phrase, "He is a man who. . . ." Furthermore if, according to TRB, Vance "gets attention for his earnestness" he must then be a good speaker and/or rhetorician, well endowed with what Aristotle called "ethos" (credibility) though somewhat lacking in "pathos" (appeals to the audience's drives and emotions). Fortunately, TRB seems to approve of Vance's "logos," or, in Aristotle's terms, his use of appeals to reason.

As Emeritus Professor of "Rhetoric and Oratory" at Hamilton College, a title lifted from Harvard's Boylston Chair of Rhetoric and Oratory, once occupied by John Quincy Adams and later by Archibald MacLeish, I deeply resent what has happened to "rhetoric," that once noble word.

Charles L. Todd
Clinton, New York

'Cancel' no more

To the editors:

Unless you quit printing letters from jerks who read a good article and then say "cancel my subscription," I may cancel mine.

William C. Gee
Dallas, Texas

Jefferson's surprise

To the editors:

More than Mobil's interpretation of the First Amendment would have surprised Thomas Jefferson, as William A. Henry III suggested in "Apologies, PBS Style" (*TNR*, May 24). He also would have been surprised to learn that he had written that guarantee.

The First Amendment was drafted by James Madison. Jefferson, in France at the time, corresponded frequently with him and other drafters, but did not participate in drafting the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

Nat Abbate, Executive Editor
University of Detroit Journal of Urban Law
Detroit, Michigan

Correction:

William A. Henry III, in his article on the PBS television show "Death of a Princess" and the panel discussion that followed it ("Apologies, PBS-Style," *TNR*, May 24), attributed to journalist Peter Iseman the comment, "Honor, especially where a woman is involved, is a very touchy thing." According to the PBS transcript of the discussion, that remark was made by Muddasir Siddiqui, a Boston Moslem clergyman.

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Gay Talese's sexual circus

To the editors:

Barbara Grizzuti Harrison would be more convincing in her outburst against bigotry in her review of *Thy Neighbor's Wife* if she did not claim at the same time that "every responsible human being" she knows is a feminist. In fact, feminists seem not even sufficiently responsible to accept the consequences of their own beliefs.

Talese and other men who tell the truth about male sexuality outside of monogamous marriage are simply dismissed as individually "pathetic" or "pitiable." Harrison might at least contemplate the possibility that if a rich and successful writer like Talese is sexually pitiable, the millions of less accomplished men might also face problems worthy of her interest as an expert in sexuality.

Until given meaning by the long-term love of a woman, male sexuality is indeed as short-term, performance-tested, empty, and compulsive as Talese describes. Women who live with the potentiality of motherhood within their own flesh—who can irrevocably achieve the evolutionary purpose and summit of sexuality with only a short relationship with a man—often find incomprehensible the radically different male experience. Men necessarily rely for sexual identity on the continually repeated performance of a role, both in bed and in the marketplace. Even fatherhood requires a woman's acknowledgment of paternity and acceptance as husband, which can always, particularly under the terms of feminism, be withdrawn.

Yet Harrison would deny men the feelings of physical and emotional dominance that are necessary for sexual confidence, potency, and love and she would try to counteract by the interventions of law and government the superior earnings that men win in all the world's societies because of their greater biological aggressiveness, psychological dominance, and their need to perform as provider in order to qualify for a family role and real sexuality.

I think feminists should be responsible enough to understand that the contemptible circus described by Talese or the similar throes of homosexuality are the logical recourse of men in a feminist world. That's why all the skin magazine publishers, gay liberationists, and similarly "responsible" types are also fervent feminists. Feminism reduces women to the lowest terms of male sexuality, while the disciplines of civilized life, love, and family—the longer dimensions of female sexuality—slowly dissolve. Harrison is perfectly right and womanly in cherishing these values, but she is wrong to deny that they are necessarily founded in sexual differences, not on the androgyny that she advocated in an earlier book. It is in the sexual circus of Gay Talese that androgyny rules, by reducing female sexuality to the aimless rut of unredeemed and unmarried manhood.

George Gilder
Tyringham, Massachusetts

The pope and politics

To the editors:

Richard P. McBrien's piece on Representative Drinan's ouster from Congress ("The Drinan Coup," *TNR*, June 14) was right on target. Further evidence that Pope John Paul II's action was aimed mainly at Drinan is the Vatican decision to leave in his post Father Donald Shea, head of the Republican National Committee's Catholic/Ethnic division. Shea was the chief architect of the unsuccessful 1978 Packwood-Moynihan bill to provide massive federal aid to parochial schools through tuition reimbursement income tax credits. Drinan was one of the members of Congress who voted against Shea's bill.

Edd Doerr
Silver Spring, Maryland

Intellectual sleight of hand

To the editors:

In the course of giving President Carter his weekly thrashing, the editors of *The New Republic* charge him with simultaneously undermining the middle class through inflation, manifesting a lack of "special concern" for the "poor and afflicted," and failing to preserve the "balance of power" with the Soviet Union ("What We See In Anderson," *TNR*, May 3). Showing that special concern and maintaining that balance of power presumably would require more federal spending than is currently contemplated. But increases in federal spending will add to the rate of inflation. There is a contradiction there somewhere. But who cares about logical inconsistencies when there is an opportunity to skewer That Man in the White House?

Making use of the contradictory arguments of the left and the right may add polemical verve to an editorial. But it constitutes intellectual sleight of hand and it will not be taken seriously by anyone who appreciates coherent reasoning.

Peter Connolly
Washington, DC

On Kondracke and Fairlie

To the editors:

Thank you for the crackling juxtaposition of Morton Kondracke's "According to Garth" and Henry Fairlie's "Curse of The Quiche Eaters" (*TNR*, June 21). Kondracke's shrewd political analyses are second to no one's, in my opinion, but his flip *ad hominem* digs at Carter and Reagan left his article a poor second to Fairlie's, which asks the important question: Is Anderson acceptable?

Although Fairlie is, I believe, a bit too rough on Anderson for jangling the small change of American politics, Fairlie's answer to the question above is my answer to Kondracke's brilliant elucidation of Anderson's political legerdemain: Anderson is *not* acceptable. If he actually makes it to the presidency, we're likely to have another four years of Carter-style buffoonery where we can't afford it: in foreign policy.

John R. Dunlap
San Jose, California

Osborne and an old fool

To the editors:

Bravo to John Osborne from the 70s—the age, not the decade (White House Watch: "Preferring Jimmy," *TNR*, June 14). If you have lived the life of the mind it is a wonderful age, full of perspective. If you have not (and Reagan has not), it can be a very foolish age. In Reagan we will have an old fool for a president.

Judge Paul M. Perkins (retired)
Minerva, Ohio

Anti-intellectualism

To the editors:

I see that your two Minneapolis correspondents (*TNR*, June 21) had trouble penetrating the subtleties of John Womack's article on the Cuban Revolution, and they delight in portraying him as a naive ideologue who has been taken in by the calculatedly cosmetic surface of Castro's Cuba.

(continued on page 36)

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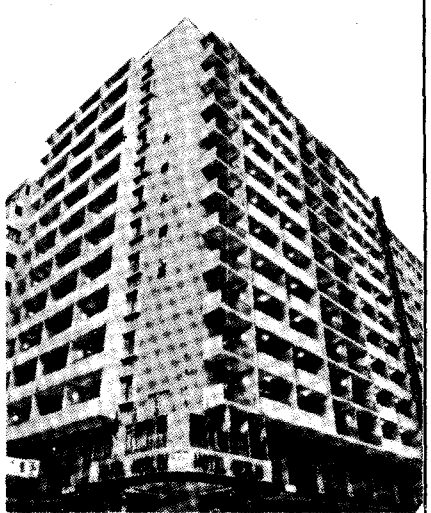

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

July 5 & 12, 1980

Tax Seduction

All three major presidential candidates were cooing to the voters about tax cuts last week. Ronald Reagan, singing in harmony with Republican congressional leaders, proposed a $36 billion tax cut for the year beginning January 1, 1981. As we predicted two weeks ago ("Inflation, 4; Carter, 0"), the Carter administration—ignoring the president's stern declaration in March that there would be no tax cut until the budget is balanced—is dropping broad hints that it will announce a 1981 tax cut in July. The figure being bandied about is $25 billion. John Anderson, in a speech unveiling his "reindustrialization" policy, said he was against an immediate tax cut "in the midst of a highly charged election campaign," but went on to urge extensive tax cuts for individuals and business "to boost savings and investment."

The Republicans invented "supply-side economics" as a political issue, but their proposed tax cut is the least supply-oriented of the three. Of the $36 billion they propose to cut, $31.5 billion represents a 10 percent reduction in tax rates for individuals. The rest is the first-year cost of the misconceived 10-5-3 plan for business depreciation (see "Saving Capitalism From Its Friends," *TNR*, April 26). Overall this is a straightforward, traditional, demand-stimulus cut. Reagan said it is needed because "production lines are being idled, factory gates are closing across the land, and housing construction has gone into a tailspin." If Democrats proposed this scheme with this kind of talk, Republicans would be quick to damn the exercise as "Keynesian." As it stands, they are happy to let average taxpayers think that the Republican bag of goodies is filled with small presents with their names on them. Business executives, meanwhile, will know that the business depreciation plan, after it is slipped through at a first-year cost of four or five billion dollars, will be saving companies $80 billion a year in taxes—half of all revenues from the corporate income tax—by the end of the decade.

Reagan proposes no spending cuts to go with his tax reduction, but he insists vaguely that billions can be saved by eliminating "waste." He thus sidesteps the great Republican debate over the "free lunch": will tax cuts pay for themselves by stimulating increased economic activity, or does fiscal prudence require spending cuts as well? No Republicans are heard to complain. The excitement of the political moment has smothered the doctrinal fires.

The Anderson proposals and the noises emanating from the Carter people are roughly similar. Both favor more generous depreciation; Anderson fudgily endorses something "along the lines of" 10-5-3. Both favor tax breaks for small savers. Both present their ideas as long-run approaches to the productivity problem rather than short-term stimuli.

Though we don't put much stock in the supply-side nostrums, we agree with all the candidates that some adjustments are needed to correct for what inflation does both to the total tax burden on individuals and to the incentives to save and invest. In judging whether the candidates' tax promises really address the problems of fairness and economic prosperity, or

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whether they are merely bribes to the voters, let us propose two litmus tests. Does the candidate propose any changes that would *increase* some taxes? And what does the candidate propose to do about social security?

The social security payroll tax is the most unfair system of raising government revenue now in operation. The rate (now 6.13 percent) is flat, not progressive by income. Income from capital is exempt. Income from wages over a certain limit (now $25,900) is exempt. Income of civilian government employees is exempt. Because the American population is getting older and Congress has indexed benefits to inflation, the burden of financing social security through its own payroll tax gets heavier all the time. Next year the rate is scheduled to increase to 6.65 percent and the maximum income taxed to $29,700. Even so, today's workers are financing a level of retirement benefits they never will enjoy themselves. It would be fairer and more logical to finance social security through the general income tax, but this would involve admitting that Social Security is a politically determined social welfare program and not a guaranteed insurance plan. Politicians have been reluctant to to do this.

The Republican tax proposal does nothing at all about social security. The Carter administration whispers of countering next year's increase with a 10 percent social security credit against the regular income tax. This amounts to financing 10 percent of social security contributions out of general revenues without admitting it. John Anderson proposes to use the revenues from his 50-cents-a-gallon gasoline to cut the social security payroll tax in half. Since wealthier people use more gasoline, the net effect would be progressive. The cut in the employer's portion of the tax would reduce the cost of employment, thus encouraging new jobs and also reducing inflation. And of course the plan would conserve energy.

On the other litmus test—a willingness to raise certain taxes—Anderson does not come out looking so rosy. As a whole, this society is not overtaxed. Other nations without our serious productivity problems devote higher proportions of their gross national products to government activity. There are many services our government should be providing for us that it is not. The problem is not the total amount of money raised, but the methods of raising it. Eliminating the distortions in the tax code involves lowering some taxes, but increasing others. Yet none of the candidates, Anderson included, wants to talk about this.

Exempting some interest income to encourage savings is a pleasant idea. Ending the exemption for consumer interest *payments*, on mortgages and credit purchases, is not so pleasant, but much more logical if the purpose is to make more money available for productive investment. Indexing capital gains for inflation makes sense, but only if capital gains get taxed eventually and don't escape all tax when passed on to heirs. In his fact sheet for farmers, Anderson brags of his central role in preserving this loophole for inherited property.

Until the candidates stop hoarding the bad news while spreading the good news, their promises of tax cuts are not seductive. Since Anderson's campaign is based on his alleged willingness to speak unpleasant truths, his failure to do so about taxes is especially disappointing.

Yea, I'm the wizard . . . and we don't want your kind in this neighborhood, so beat it.

Memory Lane

BROAD CARTER POLICY WILL RESTRICT SALES OF WEAPONS ABROAD

President Carter, who made his statement after a three-month study by the White House, the State Department, the Pentagon, and the Central Intelligence Agency said: "The virtually unrestrained spread of conventional weaponry threatens stability in every region of the world."

—*The New York Times*, May 20, 1977

Jimmy Carter: My own belief is that the Saudis have made their choice of weapons and the appurtenances or armaments on the F-15 on a basis of defense.

—Press conference, April 28, 1978

Q: If the Saudi sale goes through, are we planning now or in the future to provide the Saudis with multiple ejection racks for F-15s?
Harold Brown: No.
Q: If the sale goes through, are we planning now or in the future to provide the Saudis with any sophisticated air-to-ground munitions, such as the Maverick missile, GWU-15 or laser bombs for the F-15s?
Harold Brown: No.
Cyrus Vance: No.

—Hearings before the House International Relations Committee, May 9, 1978

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Saudi Arabia has not requested nor do we intend to sell any other systems or armaments that would increase the range or enhance the ground attack capability of the F-15.

—May 9, 1978, letter from Harold Brown to John Sparkman, chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee

SAUDIS SEEK EQUIPMENT FOR F-15s, POSING QUANDARY FOR WASHINGTON

White House and State Department officials said Saudi leaders had recently told Washington that a failure to provide the equipment would damage relations on several fronts.

"They've thrown down the gauntlet," one official said. "We need a lot of things from the Saudis," another aide asserted, "and there's not much we can do but to grant the request."

. . . According to American officials, Saudi Arabia is seeking a large package of equipment for the F-15 force, including conformal fuel pods and multiple ejection racks. The fuel pods, fitted to the exterior of the aircraft, would extend the range of the fighters and the ejection racks would permit them to carry much larger loads of bombs.

In addition, Saudi Arabia is also said to be interested in obtaining KC-135 tankers for refueling the F-15s in midair; an advanced air-to-air missile, the AIM-9L, for deployment aboard the F-15s; and airborne warning and control aircraft that could be used to direct the fighters in combat.

—*The New York Times*, June 17, 1980

US LINKS AFGHAN SITUATION AND SAUDIS' REQUEST

Thomas Reston, a State Department spokesman, confirmed an article in The New York Times today that such a sale was under consideration. He said that the United States and Saudi Arabia have "an ongoing dialogue" on military sales. . . .

—*The New York Times*, June 18, 1980

Politics

Is Ronnie Going Soft?

The collapse of the effort to oust Bill Brock as Republican national chairman has been greeted with sighs throughout the GOP establishment. It is taken as evidence that the bottom line for Ronald Reagan this year is winning the presidency and that he understands the importance of a united party in accomplishing that end. Looking forward, optimists in the party can see Reagan picking a Republican "moderate" as his vice presidential running mate—either George Bush or Howard Baker—and campaigning as a pragmatic problem-solver, rather than a rigid right-wing ideologue.

There are signs that Reagan does intend to do lots of moderate-seeming things to get elected, but the Brock incident still raises disturbing questions about Reagan. His behavior suggests not so much that there's a hot-eyed right-wing purist lurking behind his easygoing, quick-smiling facade as that Reagan lacks adequate personal lines of communication to the party and the country. Reagan seems to have surrounded himself with aides who are ideologically hidebound, power-seeking, vindictive, or second-rate. If he gets elected president and such people wall him off from what is going on in the world, God help the GOP, the USA, and everyone else.

This is not to say that a Reagan administration would be a replay of Richard Nixon's. Psychologically, there's all the difference in the world between Ronald Reagan and Richard Nixon. Nixon seems to have hidden behind a phalanx of crewcut Germans in order to shield himself from the necessity of painful human contact. Reagan, on the other hand, seems totally self-assured and at ease with other people.

Yet there was something Nixonesque about the campaign to oust Brock. It was reminiscent, in many ways, of the plot to sack the last great party-building Republican chairman, Ray Bliss of Ohio, in 1968 and 1969. Bliss had repaired the GOP after the Goldwater debacle of 1964, much as Brock has rebuilt it after the shocks of 1974 and 1976, by emphasizing grassroots organizing and recruitment of candidates at the local and state legislative levels who would provide the party with a long-term future.

Bliss fell afoul of Nixon in much the same way that Brock rankled Reagan—he was too neutral. In 1966, when Nixon was campaigning on behalf of numerous GOP congressional candidates, he demanded that the Republican National Committee pay the bills. Bliss refused on grounds that the committee shouldn't aid a potential presidential candidate when rival contenders for the 1968 nomination were paying their own political bills. Bliss also refused to make Nixon the party's chief spokesman on an election eve TV program, again on the grounds that it would give Nixon an undue advantage for 1968. As Evans and Novak recall in their book *Nixon in the White House*, "Nixon was outraged and bitter in his private invective against Bliss. To Bliss himself, Nixon characteristically said nothing. A black mark was quietly entered against him on that invisible ledger."

After Nixon had locked up the 1968 nomination, his high command discussed dumping Bliss right after the nominating convention, but decided that the move would be too divisive, since Bliss was popular with GOP professionals. Rather, the ax fell—and it was clumsily wielded by Nixon agents, not Nixon himself—after Nixon's inauguration.

Brock's problem with the Reagan entourage dates

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from 1977, when Reagan and Senator Paul Laxalt agreed to sign a fundraising letter for the national committee blasting President Carter's Panama Canal treaties. They thought they had an agreement from Brock in return that they could use proceeds from the letter to charter airplanes to campaign around the country against the treaties. Brock, though, refused on grounds that the national committee should not pay travel expenses for potential presidential candidates, especially on an issue about which the Republican party was divided.

I do not know whether Reagan entered any black marks in a ledger against Brock. But it's clear that Laxalt and Reagan's longtime political aide, Lyn Nofziger, have been after Brock's scalp ever since it became certain that Reagan would be the 1980 nominee. They and other Reagan allies spread stories that Brock was secretly biased toward Gerald Ford, that Brock's national committee bureaucracy was lazy and loaded with dead wood, that Brock was purposely trying to embarrass Reagan by giving jobs to people who quit his campaign when Reagan fired John P. Sears as his first campaign manager. They also sent Reagan's New Hampshire chairman, Gerald Carmen, down to Washington to be Reagan's "liaison" with the national committee. Carmen proceeded to terrorize Brock's subordinates, informing some of them they were sure to be fired when Reagan won the nomination.

If Reagan wanted Brock out, he handled his message-passing as badly as Nixon did with Bliss. If he didn't—and he said he didn't in a meeting with Brock in California and had his campaign chairman say it again to Brock later in Washington—then Reagan did not know what his underlings were doing. Reagan was asked in a press conference about the issue in early June and responded that Brock would be staying on through the election—which is as long as Brock wanted to stay. That quieted Laxalt, Nofziger & Co. for about a week, but then the drumfire started up again that Reagan wanted Brock out. It took intercessions from all the Republican leaders of Congress plus several governors and state chairmen before Reagan finally issued a categorical statement that Brock was staying on through the election, with Reagan's Pennsylvania chairman, Drew Lewis, joining the committee as deputy chairman and "chief operating officer."

Since the story ended well, Republicans now are inclined to believe that Reagan won't sacrifice the long-term interests of the party in order to satisfy power-hungry or overly ideological aides. They go on to conclude that Reagan will not cave in to right-wing pressure on the party platform or the vice presidency, that he will not reject Baker simply because of his soft views on abortion and the Panama Canal, or Bush because of his tardy withdrawal from the presidential race. They conclude he will open his campaign to the moderates and keep the party united. And if he does all this, they say, he will win.

He may do just that. There is evidence that Reagan is beginning to reach out broadly within the party for advisers in order to improve his chances of winning. Instead of sticking with the tight group of California loyalists and conservatives on his campaign staff, he apparently is going to bring on former Nixon-Ford White House aide William E. Timmons as his political director. There has been some talk of giving jobs to some of Bush's top campaign aides, which would be a real sign of opening up, since many of them worked for Gerald Ford against Reagan in 1976. Reagan's foreign policy advisory committee is shortly to be enlarged to include some Bush people, including former CIA deputy director Ray Cline and former White House security adviser Brent Scowcroft. Reagan's new tax cut proposal is another sign of pragmatism—instead of pressing for a full Kemp-Roth 30 percent slash, Reagan seems to have heeded traditional economists and cautious politicians who told him to move more slowly. And Reagan advisers hint that there may be work even for Henry Kissinger in the Reagan administration.

The question, though, is how much of this broadening and compromising is for political effect, and how much shows real moderation and reaching out. The question for the Republican party is: does Reagan appreciate the value of party-building, or did he just keep Brock to quiet a storm of complaints from the GOP pros? If Reagan follows the Nixon example, should he get elected, he will not only show Brock the gate, but install a party chairman whose role will be solely to serve White House political interests.

That, by the way, is precisely what Jimmy Carter did. Not a cent is being budgeted at the Democratic National Committee for state legislative races this year, even though 1980 is a census year and newly elected legislatures will reapportion congressional seats beginning next year—which will help determine who controls Congress during the next decade. If President Carter were smart, he would immediately offer Teddy Kennedy the job of raising money for and otherwise assisting Democratic candidates around the country. (If Kennedy were smart, he'd start in on that job, whether or not Carter asked him.)

When Nixon canned Bliss, it was the end of the Republican party's rebuilding process that began in 1964. The GOP's election strength declined steadily at

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the state, local, and congressional levels from 1968 to 1976, and even Nixon's 1972 landslide didn't help, since the White House shared none of its money or political influence with the party. The same could happen if Reagan, once elected, appoints a narrow-minded crony to the national chairmanship.

But the Brock incident raises doubts that far transcend the GOP. If Reagan wanted Brock out, but couldn't bring himself to fire the man cleanly—told Brock, in fact, that he wanted him to stay—what does that say about how well Reagan will run the country? About as well, maybe, as other presidents who say one thing and do another, such as Carter. Or if Reagan didn't want Brock out and didn't know what his aides were doing, what does that say about his ability to govern? It says he isn't paying attention, or isn't very smart.

Morton Kondracke

A Fool and His Money

First Principles

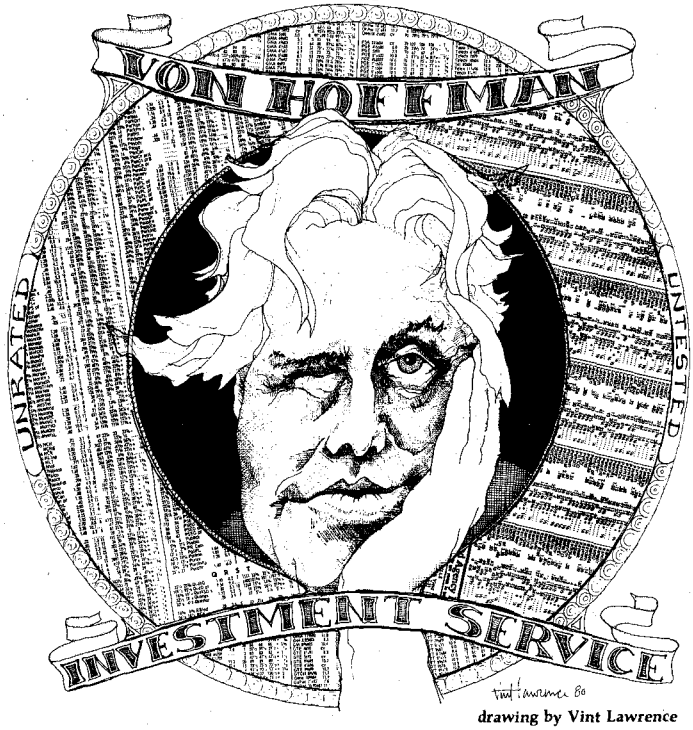
(A theory currently popular on Wall Street is that choosing stocks at random can be a more effective investment strategy than relying on the advice of experts. A deeply held belief in the business world is that liberals have their heads in the clouds and no understanding of practical matters. To test both these propositions, we have chosen a liberal at random—a Mr. Nicholas von Hoffman of Washington, DC—and asked for his observations on investment opportunities. Mr. von Hoffman's comments will appear monthly.)

The 1970s was the decade that made Americans interest-rate conscious. Before that there were millions of us who thought the bank was doing us a favor by allowing us to deposit our money so it wouldn't get stolen or spent. That was what the old Christmas clubs were about. You put so much in an interest-free account every week to save up to play Santa. Now we shop for interest rates and, for the last few years, a lot of us have found them in money market funds.

You do not deposit your paycheck in a money market fund, but buy into it. Your money is then pooled with other people's to buy a basketful of short-term obligations or IOUs, either from the government or from the banks or the better sort of corporations. These IOUs or notes or Treasury bills recently have been paying much better interest than you could get at the Savings and Loan Association, so that a vast amount of money, more than $75 billion, has been sucked into the money market funds. It's been wonderful for people with small amounts of money. Thirteen, 14, 15 percent interest and you can write checks on your fund investment just as though it were a bank account. (Of course inflation and taxes make even these high rates a worse investment than the old no-interest Christmas clubs.)

Now the fun is ending, and perhaps also the funds. The interest on the short-term (30 to 120 days) paper which the funds buy is going down, and so will the rates enjoyed by money in cash or money funds—the names are used interchangeably. The funds either will have to pass the lower interest (minus their profit, of course) on to their investors, or they will have to reach out and buy new kinds of IOUs which may continue to pay higher rates but which are more risky.

The nice thing about money funds has been their safety. Why gamble on buying wild, crazy-guy kinda stuff that's paying 16 percent when you can get good as gold (well, almost) US government notes that you know won't sour and which pay almost as much?



drawing by Vint Lawrence

But while you can use a money market fund as though it were a checking account with a superduper interest rate, there is one solid difference between it and a bank. It isn't insured by the government. If the little mountainous silhouettes on its financial oscilloscope break down into a continuous flattened line, you have lost your money.

Most funds are too conservatively managed to go dead, so that if short-term interest rates continue to slide, people owning shares in these funds will have to decide whether to stick with their fund, go back to the safety of savings banks, which are insured and which may soon be paying competitive interest rates, or—what? Where, oh where can we find safety and a high return?

In the old days, before Paul Volcker became chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, at least interest rates didn't bounce up and down the way they do now. When

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Nick's Picks . . . Bart's Charts

This department will follow a mythical investment fund that acts on Nicholas von Hoffman's monthly recommendations. The exercise will keep Mr. von Hoffman on his toes, knowing that unlike the other commentary that fills these pages, his wisdom can be measured objectively by real-world standards. It also will allow readers who either haven't the resources, or are unwilling to part with them just yet, to experience vicariously the thrill of capital gains and the agony of bankruptcy. To keep things sufficiently hypothetical, our portfolio will start with one million dollars in a typical money market fund, Dreyfus Liquid Assets. Each month we will make one or more investments in increments of about $100,000. We will deduct any expenses incurred in the course of our transactions (brokers' fees, for example), and, at the appropriate time, any taxes payable to the IRS. Each month we will compare the fund's performance to other financial indicators, such as the Dow Jones Industrial Average. We also will compare it to the Consumer Price Index, to see if we are actually gaining any ground.

Our first investments will combine the safety of triple-A-rated Beatrice Foods bonds with the more speculative potential of pork belly futures. Beatrice Foods makes products ranging from Dannon Yogurt and La Choy Oriental foods to Samsonite Luggage, and issue bonds paying 10⅞ percent of their par value. Each bond has a face value of $100, so it pays $10.875 in interest each year to its holder. (Payments are made semi-annually, in February and August.) But the price that we must actually pay for these bonds is determined on the New York Exchange, not by the par value. On June 20, Beatrice bonds were going for about $106.50, which means an effective yield of 10.2 percent. Not bad, since in the last month our money market fund was paying only about eight percent, and this probably will drop even further as interest rates continue their decline. At $106.50 for each bond, we can buy 930 bonds for $99,045. The broker's fee on this will be about $930 ($10 for each lot of 10 bonds).

Now for some variety and greater potential gain—or loss—let's try pork bellies futures, or just plain "bellies" as they call them in the trade. When you buy a future, you own a contract promising delivery of a commodity at a future date. One belly contract represents 38,000 pounds, or 19 tons, of bacon. Generally you don't take delivery (who wants 19 tons of pork bellies?), but sell the contract. If the price of pork bellies has gone up in the interim, you've earned a profit; if it has gone down. . . . Livestock and meat are traded on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. On June 20, the closing price for March 1981 contracts was 48.27 cents a pound, making one contract worth $18,342.60. But our broker will let us buy it "on margin," that is, on credit, for about $1,500. In effect the stockbroker lends us the difference, and holds the contract as collateral. So we will buy 64 contracts for $96,000, which will leave us room within our $100,000 limit to pay the fee of $60 a contract that the broker will charge us when we sell. One additional risk to note: if at any time we lose 75 percent of our equity, there will be a "margin call": the stockbrokerage, to protect its own investment, will step in and sell the contract. Seventy-five percent of $1,500 divided by 38,000 pounds works out to about three cents per pound. So if pork prices fall as little as three cents a pound at any time between now and next March, that's it, and we're out almost our entire investment. In the past year, pork bellies have dropped more than 15 cents. This is what is meant by "risk."

As of June 20, then, our portfolio looked like this:

Dreyfus Liquid Assets	$804,025
930 Beatrice Foods Bonds (market value)	99,045
64 Pork Bellies Futures Contracts (our equity)	96,000
Total, (one million dollars, less broker's fee for bonds)	$999,070

One parting piece of financial advice: the cost of your subscription to *The New Republic* may now be tax deductible as an investment expense, but taking our recommendations in order to justify the deduction is not recommended at this time.

Bart Rubenstein

Volcker took over last summer, he and President Carter were accused of pursuing a "high interest-rate policy" as a way of cooling off our still-febrile inflation. In truth, though, Volcker was innocent. What he was doing was getting the government out of trying to control interest rate levels, be they high or low. As far as he is concerned, interest rates can bounce around like the price of beef or broccoli or any other commodity. For the first time in decades, the government is letting supply and demand determine the price of money or interest rates, which is unsettling to people who've grown up accustomed to the rates moving up and down in small, pitty-pat steps.

The velocity of the rates isn't nearly as important as their direction for people who may grow dissatisfied with cash funds paying seven percent when they recently paid twice as much. These people may want to look at long-term IOUs, that is, bonds. Bonds are promises by governmental bodies or private companies to pay so much interest per year until they "mature" in five, 10, or 15 or more years. There are some very nice, secure electric utility bonds paying 10 percent or more. This is a very good return, if inflation continues to diminish and if short-term interest rates don't bound up past long-term ones.

The trick is to predict, but even the most skillful and experienced can be wrong. Take John Bunting, the recently decapitated head of the First Pennsylvania Bank, the 23rd largest in the nation. Three or four years ago Bunting went shopping for the bank and bought almost a billion dollars' worth of long-term government bonds, which were then chunking out a very nice interest. To pay for the bonds, he borrowed; he got short-term loans, which at that time had a much lower interest rate. The idea was to pay off the short-term, lower-interest loans with the money from the higher-interest rate long-term bonds. All fine and dandy, but then the interest rates on his short-term

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loans began to climb and climb until they were higher than the interest on the long-term stuff.

What to do? The best thing would have been to sell the long-term bonds and get free of the whole situation. But there were new unhappinesses for the too-shrewd Bunting. As the return on short-term notes went up, the price of long-term bonds went down. Who's going to pay $100 for a $100 bond paying eight percent interest if you can buy a short-term note paying 12 percent?

The consequences were that Mr. B got the gate and we were about to see the largest bank failure since the early 1930s, but this spring the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation rode to the rescue. The FDIC didn't do it in the barmy, soft-headed fashion of Congress agreeing to guarantee $1.5 billion of Chrysler debt. The FDIC made sure it got something out of the deal, in which it and a group of 27 banks loaned First Pennsy half a billion with a promise of a billion more if need be. In addition to getting paid back before the stockholders could be paid any dividends, the lenders get about half ownership in the bank, a stinging blow to the present stockholders, who lose half of the value of their investment.

The moral is, you pay for bad judgment. Or is it? Since being given the heave-ho, Bunting, architect of this disaster, has received a quarter of a million bucks in unearned salary and $100,000 in severance pay. For the next five years he'll draw $5,000 a month until, tra-la, he starts on his First Pennsylvania pension. Maybe the moral is, you pay for bad judgment when you play with your own money, but not when you play with someone else's. That, at least, is the principle on which this column will operate.

The Hunt brothers recently learned this lesson from their adventures in Silverland. There's money to be made in the commodity markets (which includes trading in everything from silver to pork bellies—bacon to you and me) if you don't get sandbagged on the way to the bank. The story of what happened with the Hunts is still emerging and it may be a long time before the mosaic of actions, deals, double deals, and double crosses is put together into a coherent picture. One of the most recent developments, however, is the accusation by the Hunts that some of the traders who govern the commodity exchanges had a huge financial interest in seeing the price of silver hammered down. The Hunts are saying that these men used their positions on the governing boards of the markets to switch the trading rule in order to force down the price of silver and thereby clean up. The available but very incomplete evidence suggests that the Hunts may have a case, which underscores the murk and treachery of commodities, a market where a rumor can make you rich or impoverish you in an afternoon.

Rumors from South America have been making some people rich of late. They speak of meteorological disasters in the sugar cane latifundia. Bad harvests in Brazil and Cuba can mean good profits in New York and Chicago, and so the word is out that now is the time to buy sugar. Usually, though, when the word is out the profits are gone. You may recall a few years ago the Saudi Arabians and other hysterics drove the price of sugar up to about where the Hunts had silver, but by the time it occurred to small plungers they might make a buck out of sticky sweets, the price died.

People jumping into the sugar market have the satisfaction of performing a socially useful task. By helping to drive up the price of candy bars, they are coincidentally practicing preventive dentistry with children from low-income slum families. There are fewer unintended beneficial side effects from investing in Sasol, Ltd., the South African company which apparently has developed a commercially price-competitive plant for converting coal into fuel oil, gasoline, and myriad other petrochemical products. The only immediate difficulty appears to be that black, non-shareholding freedom fighters have taken to blowing up the oil refineries. Not recommended as an investment for people who have trouble sleeping at night, either because of bad consciences or fear of burglars.

For people who just want to continue to collect the high rates of interest they've been getting on their money funds, the best opportunity is probably the highly rated industrial and utility bonds coming on the market just now. Triple-A-rated Beatrice Foods, a multibillion-dollar outfit that has the reputation of having the first dollar it ever earned, recently sold bonds paying almost 11 percent. For folks who don't hate Ma Bell and her daughters to the point of avoidance, triple-A-rated New England Telephone bonds have been paying off at almost 12 percent. A word of caution: don't buy these bonds if you think you might need to sell them fast to get your money out. They fluctuate in price and should be held only by people who can wait to sell them when they're up.

Nicholas von Hoffman

Nicholas von Hoffman is a syndicated columnist.

Violating the ultimate metaphor.

Aardvark's Fate

For centuries the aardvark has led a quiet, retiring, semi-nocturnal life in South Africa. Even after it was moved from its native habitat into the zoos of the world, it shunned not only the public light but light itself. It is now an endangered species (actually an endangered genus, for the aardvark is both genus and

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species). But the aardvark is not in danger of physical extinction like the snail darter, or the lousewort, or the various kinds of bandicoots; it is in danger of losing what it appears to value more than life itself, its privacy.

Ten years ago I wrote a poem entitled "The Aardvark," hoping that anyone who read the poem would conclude that he or she knew as much about the aardvark as anyone would want to know, and lose interest in the animal. Among other things, the poem pointed out, aardvarks cannot look and listen at the same time; they cannot see red or green, or pink or purple, or Roman brown; they see only gray both night and day; they eat only termites, especially those that have eaten the dead wood of the tree of knowledge; with long tongues they speak a thin language no one can understand; and because aardvarks have no gizzards they think only of soft food.

I could have added that, by one report of an observant naturalist, the aardvark will turn vegetarian but only to eat wild cucumber which has grown from seeds germinated in the excrement of another aardvark. Moreover, aardvarks, according to students of evolution, did not evolve from anything, nor are they evolving into anything, like horses or kangaroos. The aardvark is a member of the Chordata Phylum, which has a notochord, a rodlike flexible structure, instead of a backbone. But I thought no one would want to know any more about the aardvark.

A noted theologian long ago observed that the worst heresies are those that are closest to the truth. His point is well demonstrated in the common perception of the aardvark, for the aardvark is like many other animals, possibly like all other animals. It is like a pig in some respects, like a rabbit, like a donkey, like a badger, noticeably like an anteater. But no animal is like an aardvark, for if an animal is like an aardvark, it is an aardvark. In other words, the aardvark metaphor is not reversible. In the natural world the aardvark is the ultimate metaphor, as in the supernatural order it is accepted that God is like all his creatures. But it is wrong to say that some creature is like God. Lucifer, the angel who fell or was cast down from heaven, tried to reverse, to his or its sorrow, this metaphor.

A few months ago, an aardvark was brought onto the Johnnie Carson show and displayed by a curator from the San Diego Zoo. In March the American Association of Aardvark Aficionados, not content to be as publicity-shy as the object of their interest, declared in a letter to the *New York Times* that the first week in March was National Aardvark Week. The Association also announced that a Miss American Aardvark contest would be held at the Philadelphia Zoo. This announcement indicated either ignorance or surprising knowledge on the part of the members of that society, since aardvarks, unlike pandas, for example, are sexually very modest and undemonstrative. It is, according to the curator from the San Diego Zoo, very difficult to distinguish sexes among the aardvarks. In fact, there are some experts who say that even the aardvarks are somewhat confused on this point.

Animal Kingdom magazine could not remain silent. It reported the death of an aardvark called Bronx, who after living quietly without progeny in the New York Zoo for 13 years had been moved to a zoo in Miami, where in the 10 years remaining before his death he sired 17 offspring, all born in captivity, the penultimate indignity for an aardvark.

At least one national columnist, presumably in need of material for a column, has taken up the aardvark and treated it, in the common manner of columnists, disrespectfully.

Most recently, Congressman John Anderson, running as an independent candidate for the presidency, and insisting that he has no intention of establishing a political party, has announced that he is considering the aardvark as the totem animal for his movement. This would be the ultimate violation of the aardvark.

Eugene McCarthy

PBS's invitation to suicide.

Death of a Princess

On July 10, 1979, alone and off-camera, Jo Roman, a New York artist, killed herself with an overdose of sleeping pills. It was not an impulsive act. As early as 1975, she had made up her mind that she would end her life on her own terms, purposefully and "rationally." Several years later, when she learned that she had breast cancer, she moved up the date. She would do it within a year, she decided, and proceeded to tell friends, family, and a TV film crew. Thus began a drama that culminated in a sensational front-page story in the *New York Times* and a harrowing one-hour documentary entitled "Choosing Suicide" that aired June 16 on PBS.

The documentary is a faithful record of the gatherings Jo held during that year to prepare for her great deed. It records the deliberations of a Greek chorus of chosen literati and hapless family relations drawn into her web as co-conspirators, spectators, and participants. At these meetings, all sit in the obligatory circle. Jo, the queen bee, presides. She is quiet, controlled, in command. She is experiencing no pain or disability, but her mind is made up. No one can change her resolve, but all "acknowledge" and "respect" her feelings. There is much touching, hugging, crying, and stroking. No one seems distracted by the bobbing microphones and clanking camera stands.

All the while, I am trying to figure out why they are all there. The film crew, I suppose, thinks that if she delivers they've got a hot property and, if it is done with taste, maybe an Emmy. Friends and family must feel the weight of the contemporary obligation to "be there"

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well as a variety of tanks.

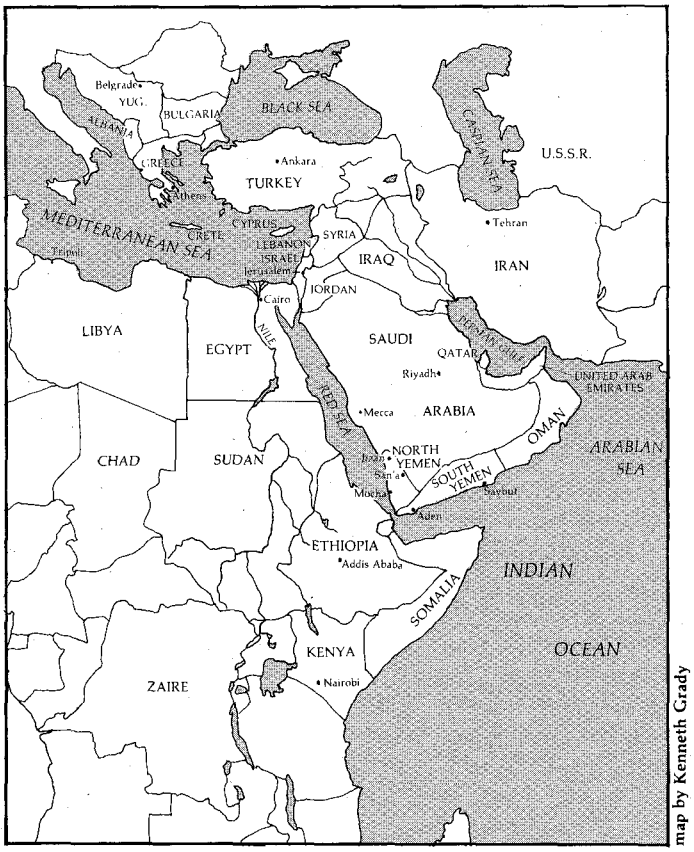
The Soviet Union, at first fearful of the Saudi Arabian and US response to the border war, jumped at the opportunity for an opening to North Yemen. But Ismail persisted in his belligerent stance toward North Yemen and thus threatened the Soviets' new relationship with the YAR.

In effect, the Soviets gave active support to the downfall of Ismail and ended up doing what they always have done: sacrificing ideology to military ambition. The Soviets undermined and helped topple a Marxist regime to help further their own strategic interests. By promoting Nasser Muhammed to the PDRY leadership and by presenting him to the world as a moderate and reasonable politician, the Soviet Union has managed to accomplish two things: it has made the PDRY palatable to the rest of the Arab world, and thus has furthered the cause of Yemeni reunification.

In the wake of Ismail's departure, the wily Nasser Muhammed lost no time making public displays of friendship with the Soviets. On May 5, Nasser defended his country's close ties with the Soviet Union, even while calling for closer, more "equal," relations with Saudi Arabia and other Arab neighbors. On May 6, Politburo members Andrey Kirilenko and Boris Ponamarov met with a highly placed member of the South Yemen government. At the end of May, Nasser traveled to Moscow and was greeted with open arms. In the meantime, seeking to legitimize his moderate stance, Nasser made reassuring trips to Kuwait, the Gulf states, and Syria.

Nor has Nasser Muhammed dragged his feet on reunification. Speaking at the opening of the conference between the two leaders, Abdulghani said: "We realize that Yemeni unity is a great contribution on South Yemen for a series of talks to explore the practical, philosophical, economic, and military prospects of reuniting the two Yemens. The talks between the two "brothers," according to Yemeni sources, were steeped in cordiality and with much talk about the common "homeland"—in terms not unlike those used by Adolph Hitler just prior to the Austrian Anschluss. Both leaders reaffirmed that the reunification of the "homeland" is the destiny of the Yemeni people and that the initial steps toward reunification would begin with the expansion of trade between the two countries and the beginnings of joint economic projects and cooperation.

Abdulghani, who appears to have little in common politically or philosophically with Nasser Muhammed, nevertheless left little doubt about his feelings on reunification. Speaking at the opening of the conference between the two leaders, Abdulghani said: "We realize that Yemeni unity is a great contribution on the part of our people to the achievement of Arab unity. Our unity is intended to attain our noble objectives of progress, freedom, and democracy. . . . Through this responsibility and hope, our people will be able to move freely and easily through the development stage



map by Kenneth Grady

toward the establishment of a highly developed Yemeni society."

In a joint statement both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to "peaceful reunification," a process that would begin with the expansion of trade and the eventual integration of their respective economies. While the substance in practical terms of the meetings between Nasser Muhammed and Abdulghani produced no concrete agreements, the tone and intent were more serious than in past reunification attempts. Military integration and cooperation probably are not far behind, and probably would involve the assistance of Cuban, Soviet, and East German advisers.

It is obvious that the Soviet Union would prefer to see a united Yemen under the leadership of the PDRY. It is likely that this could happen when the two countries actually begin to implement reunification, especially the matter of joint military enterprise and organization. It is here that the presence of Cuban, Soviet, and East German advisers will make itself felt. A united Yemen, under PDRY leadership and friendly to the Soviet Union, would allow the establishment of a permanent Soviet military base squarely below Saudi Arabia.

But it is by no means certain that peaceful reunification will take place. There are enough religious, ideological, political, and traditional differences between the two states to keep several pots boiling. The PDRY is predominantly Sunni, for instance, while North Yemen is dominated by Shiites who are constantly at odds with their own Sunni minority. The political orientation of North Yemen, predominantly a military dictatorship, is certainly a strange bedfellow

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for the Marxist PDRY and its party-dominated government machinery.

The Soviets recognize that reunification is fraught with dangers for them, and they consider the prospect of a civil war between the PDRY and North Yemen with apprehension. A civil war, while presenting military opportunities, presents the hollow prospect of a direct military confrontation with the United States, which, if threatened with the prospect of losing Saudi Arabia to the Soviets, may have to resort to guns instead of Olympic bans. It is a prospect the Soviets, struggling knee deep in the mountains of Afghanistan, may not want to risk.

In realistic terms, however, the United States cannot relish the prospect of a Yemeni civil war. However tempting it might be to use force, in terms of international reaction and legal justification, such a course may prove to be impractical. Instead, the United States should constantly and forcefully prod Saudi Arabia to overcome its fear of a strong North Yemen, encourage the Saudis to cement and be consistent in their ties with North Yemen. Perhaps then Saudi Arabia, which is the real prize in the Arabian Peninsula, will come to realize that the real outside threat to its own existence is a unified Yemen, led by the PDRY.

Amos Perlmutter

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The price of *Abertura* is caution.

Brazil's Interregnum

Brasília, Brazil.

Abertura in Portuguese means an "opening." In the careful Brazilian political lexicon, *Abertura* is a euphemism for the current transition from 16 years of harsh military dictatorship to controlled democracy. If all goes well, this step-by-step process should be completed late in 1983 with the first direct election of a president in a generation (in this vast and young nation, two decades *do* constitute a generation) after a succession of presidents named by military commanders.

For the United States, a Brazilian redemocratization is exceedingly important: the Carter administration believes that such a democracy will help stabilize Latin America—even though this political shift is certain to accentuate an increasingly independent Brazilian foreign policy. This trend is already deeply rooted in Brazilian thinking, and though Washington may deplore some aspects of it, Brazil's impact as a democracy on South American and third world politics will more than compensate.

But the dominant question in Brazil is whether all will, indeed, go well in the course of the next three years of the back-to-democracy experiment. General João Batista Figueiredo, the easygoing and surprisingly popular military president, now in his second year in office, says he is totally committed to *Abertura*—even if it moves a bit too quickly for his taste. Clearly the democratizing process faces dangers. This year inflation is running at an 85 percent annual rate (up from somewhat over 50 percent in 1979), social unrest is consequently mounting (a month-long "illegal" strike over wages early this spring paralyzed the huge São Paulo automotive industry), and the Brazilian press, radio, and television, so long shackled by censorship, are relishing the new freedoms. And to the discomfort of some, the Roman Catholic church has become a militant force for social justice.

These new expressions of social and political liberty inevitably worry the Brazilian military establishment, or parts of it. It was the military that set up the dictatorship in 1964, ousting the chaotic, inefficient, corrupt, and leftist-infiltrated, but democratic, regime of the late president João Goulart. Many unreconstructed generals and admirals are not ready to bury their "Glorious Revolution" in the name of democracy, in which they do not really believe. In deference to them, the word *Abertura* was invented, to avoid the formal acknowledgment that, in fact, the "Revolution" is already a thing of the past, and that the country is in a political interregnum.

But repressive laws are still on the books—the long-standing National Security Law, invoked to justify the arrests of São Paulo automotive union leaders, as well as the tough 1968 Institutional Act No. 5—and President Figueiredo has no intention of repealing them during his term. To the hardline military, these laws represent a guarantee that, if necessary, the political lid can be put back on in Brazil, including the reimposition of censorship and the resumption of indiscriminate arrests. In fact, the Brazilian Information Ministry announced on May 21 that it would seek congressional approval of legislation designed to punish publishers for printing information that contradicts the official version of events touching on government activities. Congress, however, may reject the bill.

Though General Figueiredo and his closest associates are known to think that a return to dictatorship, under whatever excuse, could lead to a major political explosion, the present balancing act requires the preservation of repressive legislation, and this is generally understood by the politicians. They agree that there is no point in provoking the hardliners. There is also talk that municipal elections scheduled for this autumn, the first direct elections since 1964, may be postponed under military pressure, and this, too, is

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and share the experience. And how do you turn down an invitation to a suicide?

But what's in it for Jo? Perhaps, like Tom Sawyer, she simply wants to live the fantasy of attending, indeed directing, her own wake. Jo herself invokes loftier motives with more decidedly romantic pretensions: she considers this act a work of art, "the final brush stroke on the canvas of my life." It is a claim taken with utmost seriousness by her friends, who seem to believe that art is anything that artists do (and then proceed to frame). "This is the greatest creative act of your life" gushes one friend. An unkind reviewer, taking note of Jo's paintings and sculptures strewn around the apartment, might concur with this judgment. And because it is art, Jo Roman's son can assure her that rational suicide is not something he would recommend for the masses. He has told his friends and co-workers of Jo's plans, he says, but they are all into apple pie, baseball, and religion, and they don't understand.

The masses, I infer, could begin to understand the angry crash into the highway abutment, the impulsive leap from the apartment window. They could begin to understand the everyday anguished acts of self-destruction full of killing and pain and suffering. What they would find difficult to understand is the bloodless, careless, motiveless, meaningless art of Jo Roman's rational suicide. Jo's friends, however, are awed by her innovation. After all, one friend comments, we need something more dignified than sidewalk splatter (as passé as action painting, I suppose). And Jo, in a burst of creativity, has given them the ultimate soufflé, the stylish alternative to such crude gaucheries, the artistic way to end it all. She has produced the last word in sophistication: the meticulously orchestrated, thoroughly psychoanalyzed, faithfully filmed, year-long death watch.

Jo has other reasons for suicide besides art. She and her flock coo responsively about how all this has brought them closer together, put them in touch with their own feelings, given them a profound "learning experience." In an interview taped 12 days after Jo's death, husband Mel, looking grave and lost, reflects on how the whole year leading up to Jo's death caused him great pain and suffering. But it has been worthwhile, he says, because he has learned a lot about himself. I found this a particularly sad sight: a grown man in his bereavement seeking solace in the shallowest cliché of adolescent solipsism—the world as an instrument of one's own education. It marked the moment in the show when the banality finally transcended the pathos.

Jo herself occasionally gropes for some deeper philosophic justification for her act. She proclaims suicide as the enricher and clarifier of life. Her friends stroke her hand and nod sagely in the classic group therapy mode, but I have no idea what she meant. Another group favorite was the idea that Jo is "taking control of her own life," taking responsibility for herself, finishing a job she started. They congratulate Jo for preempting God or cancer and taking her own life. In their preoccupation with the agency of her act, however, they avoid the question of its consequences. And the documentary shows us just what these consequences are: feelings of acute loss for her friends, pain and suffering for her loved ones, bewilderment and self-doubt for her husband. When one of the pernicious seeds of her act begins to flower before her eyes—when her daughter, who also has had cancer, begins to contemplate her own suicide—Jo sees not horror but raised consciousness.

Our usual response to a victim of suicide is, as Pasternak says, to "bow compassionately before [his] suffering" because "what finally makes him kill himself is not the firmness of his resolve but the unbearable quality of his anguish." Jo Roman, however, denies us our compassion because she denies herself her anguish. She opens the film looking into the camera and calmly proclaiming that her suicide, unlike others, does not involve killing and hurting, but is a reasoned response to her life. But her very coldness persuades us that we are watching not a suicide but a murder. This is why we experience not sorrow but emptiness, why we feel not pity but anger.

The anger is directed both at the murderer and at her mesmerized accomplices. A protesting voice is difficult to find. One friend says to her "I can't understand you. If someone say at age 75 said to me 'I have arthritis and I can't type'—O.K. I can understand that, but you. . . ." Can't type! What next? Suicide as the answer to a lost backhand? To a clogged Cuisinart? The anger turns to bewilderment. What happens when these people are threatened by something worse than pain or age or travail? What happens when their children or their values are threatened? Is their reward for sophistication a capacity for self-delusion so prodigious as to turn cowardice into courage, death into creativity, and suicide into art?

Not that voluntary death is either new or necessarily eccentric. History contains many acts of voluntary

Coming:

—Why I'm for Ed Clark.

—Why I'm for Barry Commoner.

—Why I'm for Jimmy Carter.

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death from Socrates and Christ to the mother who gives up her seat on the lifeboat for her child. But they died for truth or salvation or love. They died for more than a dose of good feelings or artistic conceit. What is most pathetic about Jo Roman's death is that, in her enervated and alienated circle, she died for the illusion that her death would express some transcendent reality. Like the Dadaists, she believed that her life and death were art. But at least the Dadaists were under no illusion. They considered both equally worthless.

"Choosing Suicide" is disturbing because it leaves us with the feeling that the Dadaists were right after all. For all its voguish psychobabble and pseudophilosophic paradoxes, this documentary leaves us with one conviction: that on the altar of her savage household gods—art, growth, feeling, control, creativity—Jo Roman died for nothing.

Charles Krauthammer

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Soviet opportunities.

The Yemen Strategy

For years, the Soviet Union has worked diligently and resourcefully in the byzantine vineyards of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, tightening its grip on the political processes in South Yemen by increasing its military and economic presence. Today the Soviets appear ready to attempt to reap the fruits of their labor: reunification of South and North Yemen and the consolidation and strengthening of Soviet influence in the volatile and strategic Arabian peninsula.

Three important events this year serve as early warning signals of Soviet intentions. They are the wildly misinterpreted emergence of Ali Nasser Muhammed as the top man in the PDRY, and the fall of controversial and radical president Abdul Fattah Ismail in April; Nasser Muhammed's subsequent cordial and lengthy reunification talks with North Yemen (Yemen Arab Republic) prime minister Abdul Aziz Abdulghani and his attempts at rapprochement with moderate Arabs; and the Soviet Union's opportunistic sale of arms to North Yemen, filling a vacuum left by the United States and the bumbling Saudi Arabians.

On April 21, in a sudden shake-up that stunned South Yemen's neighbors and confounded the US State Department, it was announced that Fattah Ismail had resigned for reasons of ill health. No one believed that story, but State Department experts saw this sudden change as a blow to reunification of the two Yemens, since Ismail reportedly was eager to move toward reunification and Nasser Muhammed was perceived as more cautious on the subject. The *New York Times* dutifully chimed in by reporting that Nasser Muhammed was more open to establishing friendly relationships with the West and with Saudi Arabia, and that he was more independent of the Soviets.

But there was more to the transfer of power in South Yemen than met the eye. Ismail first came to power in 1979, seven years after the Soviets signed a 10-year military agreement with South Yemen's then-president Salim Ali Rubay. The Soviets then began their military build-up in earnest, increasing the number of advisers in South Yemen from 1,100 to 2,500 in a matter of months after Rubay was deposed in an Ismail-led, East German- and Cuban-supported coup. The struggle between Rubay and Ismail, which culminated in Rubay's execution, centered on local, interparty issues. But the critical difference between the two leaders from the Soviet perspective was that Rubay favored rapprochement with the Saudis—a stance that did not sit well with the Soviet Union.

Although relations toward the Soviet Union were cemented under Ismail, the radical Marxist did not prove as malleable as the Soviets would have liked. Ismail consistently irritated and worried his Arab neighbors, first with his support of the Dhofar revolutionary group in Oman, then with his support of leftist elements in North Yemen, which did not make things easy for the Soviets in their efforts to open a bridge to North Yemen. The coming of Ismail also marked the end of the PDRY's rapprochement efforts with Saudi Arabia, which further frightened the skittish Saudis.

Ismail's ouster can be traced directly to the competition between the Soviet Union and Saudi Arabia for favored status with North Yemen. In 1978 North Yemen, under the leadership of President Ahmed al-Gashmi, had excellent relations with Saudi Arabia and hopes of better relations with South Yemen, under the leadership of the moderate Rubay. All that changed when the radical Marxist Ismail came to power. North Yemen, threatened in its border war with the Ismail-led PDRY, still hoped for good relations and assistance from Saudi Arabia. The Saudis responded by asking the United States to send almost $400 million in military aid to North Yemen, including 12 F-5E aircraft, 64 M60 tanks, and related parts, technology, and equipment. This equipment eventually was delivered to North Yemen, but not before the Saudi Arabians had vacillated about sending additional aid. The Saudis wanted to help the Yemenis fend off the PDRY but at the same time did not want to strengthen North Yemen militarily. This vacillation, and the Saudis' unwillingness to pay the US for the airlifted equipment, proved to be their undoing. North Yemen, walking a tightrope between the big powers, opened discussions with the Soviet Union and requested military aid. The Soviets promptly (according to Yemeni analysts) delivered a number of SU 22 jets, Mig 21 fighters, as

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debated in the press in terms of the price that may have to be paid for keeping *Abertura* alive.

At this stage the Brazilian military establishment is no longer monolithic, which is part of the broader problem. General Figueiredo, once the head of the country's powerful intelligence apparatus, was chosen in 1978 (and inaugurated in 1979) as a compromise candidate leaning toward liberalism over more authoritarian-minded generals. His choice reflected the mood of the country, and it constituted the continuation of the political evolution initiated by his predecessor, General Ernesto Geisel, who succeeded during his 1974-79 term in doing away with imprisonments and tortures and in ending press censorship. But scars and resentments remain, and some of the hardliners still hold important commands. President Figueiredo is thus forced to exercise a certain amount of caution in presiding over *Abertura*. Though the automotive strike in São Paulo, the biggest strike in Brazil since the 1964 revolution, had no direct impact on the democratizing process, it served to accentuate new societal strains and stresses and to highlight military concerns over them.

Most importantly, conservative military officers (and some key officials in the Figueiredo regime) became highly disturbed when the church in São Paulo assumed the role of the strikers' protector. After the government declared public rallies by the workers illegal, the church, with the personal blessings of São Paulo's Evaristo Cardinal Arns, offered its facilities to the strikers. Meetings were held in churches and on other church property, keeping the police from interfering (in this Catholic nation, churches are off-limits to the authorities) and grievously annoying the government.

Cardinal Arns, who was a courageous champion of human rights during the height of the dictatorship, was denounced as a dangerous leftist not only by generals, but also by liberal businessmen, once his admirers. In Brasília and São Paulo, mutterings were heard that much of the Brazilian church was leftist-infiltrated, an accusation that is being made as well against the press and television. President Figueiredo's own entourage tends to share these views up to a point, increasing the need for political caution.

The rising dispute between the church and the ruling military-economic establishment reflects, of course, the unresolved problem of the distribution of wealth in this country of 120 million, where extremes of riches and poverty exist cheek by jowl, and the growing middle class is squeezed brutally by inflation despite the system of indexing wages and prices. Moreover, this controversy has cast something of a shadow over the July visit to Brazil by Pope John Paul II. Brazil's conservatives hope that the pope will use his presence to discipline the progressive clergy, including the cardinals. Church liberals, on the other hand, want him to be exposed to the spectacle of Brazilian poverty in order to gain the pontiff's support in the ongoing debate over social justice.

Still, it is inflation that looms as the most serious element in the Brazilian socio-economic equation. Last December the Figueiredo government's minister of economic planning, Delfim Neto, unveiled a complex anti-inflationary package, but it may be July or August before it produces results, if at all. Much of this inflation is fueled by Brazil's massive oil imports (the country is overwhelmingly dependent on foreign petroleum), and it will be at least five years before alternate power sources—new hydroelectric power plants and the conversion of automobile engines from gasoline to sugar alcohol—are fully available.

In the meantime, Brazil has no option but to keep getting financially deeper and deeper into the red—to service its immense external debt of $50 billion (currently 50 percent of all export earnings go into debt service), to attract capital to develop new energy sources and industry, and to import oil. The economy therefore is severely distorted, affecting the domestic situation directly and immediately.

Nevertheless, most thoughtful Brazilians believe that President Figueiredo will make *Abertura* work, no matter what difficulties he faces. Thus far he is fully in control of the political picture, critical comments notwithstanding. Recently he chose to assert his authority dramatically by firing a senior army general for publicly attacking the operations of multinational corporations in Brazil. The point was not that the president necessarily wished to defend the multinationals, deeply entrenched here since the 1964 revolution, but that he would not tolerate public pronouncements by generals on the country's economic policies.

What President Figueiredo has going for him is his personal popularity and his informal style. He is the most popular of the revolution's five military presidents, presumably a prerequisite for successfully running the political transition. Brazilians, accustomed for a generation to rather forbidding military figures, take well to his accessibility and his proclivity for mixing with the crowds.

But Brazil's march toward democracy is complicated by the stunning absence of new faces on the political scene. The Figueiredo regime has allowed all post-1964 political exiles, even Communists, to return to Brazil and become involved in politics, and as new political parties are being formed (and some old ones being resuscitated) the nation faces the absence of new blood. "This is the problem with military dictatorships," said a senior government official, himself an army general. "The political process has been frozen for 16 years and no new leaders were allowed to emerge." With few exceptions, then, democratization on the political level is being conducted by men and women of the 1960s, their luster long tarnished. This, in turn, has led to considerable cynicism among politically conscious Brazilians, although generally it is expected that within

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a year or two a new generation of leaders will start surfacing.

Brazil, to be sure, is not the only country in Latin America to suffer dictatorship-inspired political atrophy. In Peru, for example, the president elected on May 18 was Fernando Belaunde Terry, a 67-year-old liberal who was ousted from office by the military in 1968. Like Brazil, Peru was unable to produce new leaders after the dictatorial period, and the ruling military regime, having decided to hold free elections after 12 years, most likely will return power to Belaunde in July, as scheduled.

On the foreign policy side, a matter of considerable interest to the United States, the trend is toward an independent posture on the part of this most powerful Latin American nation. As top Brazilian officials in Brasília explained, the time is past when Brazil automatically supported United States policies. "Normal relations," one of them said, mean the recognition by Washington that "our interests do not always converge"; yet in a major confrontation, Brazil certainly would stand alongside the United States and the West.

Brazil's new independence is readily apparent in its Middle East policy. Dependent as Brazil is on imported oil (40 percent of it comes from Iraq alone), it takes more pro-Arab attitudes than the United States would like it to. Brasília tends to favor the Palestinian cause in the Egyptian-Israeli autonomy negotiations, and the Palestine Liberation Organization has been permitted to open an office in the capital. And nothing puts more fear in Brazil than the prospect that the United States, as part of its conflict with Iran, might shut off the Persian Gulf.

An important aspect of Brazilian policy these days is the improvement of ties with other Latin American countries. President Figueiredo visited Buenos Aires during May in a successful effort to put an end to century-old dissension between Brazil and Argentina. Now there are plans for joint hydroelectric projects on their border rivers and other common economic ventures. And General Figueiredo does not want Brazil embroiled in Latin American ideological differences as he proceeds with his own *Abertura*. His first foreign trip was to democratic Venezuela last year; this year it was Argentina and Paraguay, both under military dictatorships, and later in 1980 it will be Chile, another dictatorship.

Brazil is looking with increased interest on the third world where its trade has quintupled in a decade. Foreign Minister Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro soon will visit Marxist Angola and Mozambique in Africa, as well as neutralist Tanzania, to strengthen Brazilian-African ties. The United States does not see this effort as contrary to its interests. In fact, it welcomes better relations between Brazil and the Portuguese-speaking Marxist countries in Africa on the theory that this would provide a possible alternative to their close links with Cuba and the Soviet Union. But the Brazilians are doing it their own way, not as surrogates of the United States.

In a broad sense, therefore, democratization in Brazil is clearly a plus for the United States, even if President Figueiredo insists on his foreign policy independence. Given its size and importance, a democratized Brazil can exercise constructive influence in Latin America and in the third world at large. This is a significant dimension of *Abertura*.

Tad Szulc

The all-volunteer military is in big trouble.

Son of Sad Sack

by William P. Snyder

As the all-volunteer force enters its eighth year, the evidence of failure is increasingly abundant. During fiscal year 1979, recruiting fell short of requirements by about 25,000 personnel. The Army experienced the greatest difficulty, missing its goals by 16,000. The Marine Corps met its objective, but only because it accepted a cut in authorized strength. Even the Air Force, which has enjoyed more recruiting success than the other services, fell short by 2,000. High unemployment rates have improved recruiting temporarily. Still, many recruiters doubt this year's goals will be achieved unless quotas are reduced to provide a facade of success.

The quality of recent volunteers is a matter of concern in all the services except the Air Force. Overall quality, as measured by educational attainment, is about the same as that of draftees in the 1960-64 period: seven of 10 have high school diplomas; reading

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skills are about the same as the non-college segment of the general population. These aggregate statistics, however, conceal sharp differences among the four services. While Air Force volunteers are of excellent quality, better even than the personnel that service attracted during the draft years, Army recruits are of decidedly lower quality. Half of recent Army volunteers have reading skills at eighth grade or lower levels, and the quality of Navy and Marine Corps volunteers isn't much better. Thus, quality is lowest in those services that provide the nation's conventional military capabilities. The decline in educational levels takes place at a time when military operations and complex equipment demand greater skill and judgment on the part of individual servicemen.

The enlisted ranks are unrepresentative of the society they serve. Almost one-quarter of all new recruits are black, double their share of the general population. The number of other minorities, especially Hispanics, is growing. Minority soldiers are heavily overrepresented in low-skill positions and in combat formations; tank, artillery, and infantry outfits in most Army divisions are half black. Exposure to risk is greatest in these units, which raises the specter of disproportionate casualties among minorities in wartime. Of equal concern to military leaders is the poor quality of white recruits. Most white enlistees come from the poorer and least educated segments of white society, with few middle-class youth from urban or suburban homes. Indeed, white recruits entering the Army have significantly lower educational attainment levels than black recruits.

These shortcomings in the junior enlisted ranks, particularly in the Army and Navy, are intensified by several other developments. First, for reasons of economy, there has been a sharp reduction in the amount of formal military training volunteers receive. Initial recruit training has been shortened; specialty and technical training courses have been curtailed. As a result, volunteers arriving in their units are inadequately trained for the jobs they are assigned. Junior officers are confident that new recruits can be turned into effective soldiers and sailors with the proper training. But the shortage of non-commissioned officers qualified to run training programs is exacerbated by the fact that 10,000 of the service's best young sergeants and petty officers are on recruiting duty. Overall, training and job performance are below par, which contribute to low morale within small units.

Second, about 40 percent of the young men and women now joining the services are married, a much higher share of the age group than in the general population. The pay of junior enlisted personnel ($500 to $600 per month) is not sufficient to support one or more dependents. Estimates of the number of military families eligible for welfare vary from 100,000 to 275,000. Social services and medical care also are inadequate—the services now are short about 2,500 physicians. Since the armed forces cannot provide family housing to junior enlisted personnel, military ghettos grow in civilian communities near large military bases. (Unfavorable exchange rates and cultural isolation create an even more serious situation in overseas areas such as Germany.) The family problems of young enlisted personnel add up to a loss of morale and efficiency.

Third, as recruiting of men has become more difficult, the services increasingly have turned to women. There are now about 150,000 women in the armed forces, as compared to less than 20,000 a decade ago. Service women have high educational qualifications and are performing effectively in virtually all non-combat positions (they cannot be assigned to combat units or warships). Yet these statistics conceal two problems: pregnancy and single-parent families. Both create great difficulties in small units. In the Army, for example, one of every nine women is pregnant at any one time; one in 11 heads a single-parent family. The armed forces are not prepared to handle these problems, and training and operational activities in support units, where women are concentrated, are often seriously compromised.

The overall picture, then, is one of a young and not very talented junior enlisted force, composed mainly of minorities and lower-class whites. Since only two-thirds of all new recruits complete their enlistments, personnel turnover is exceptionally high, contrary to one of the key expectations of early advocates of the all-volunteer force. The situation is most severe in the Army and slightly less difficult in the Navy and Marine Corps. Only the Air Force has escaped the consequences of these trends in the all-volunteer force.

The problems in the junior enlisted ranks contribute significantly to another difficulty: retention of NCOs and junior officers. These young careerists are frustrated. Their reenlistment rate has dropped from over 80 percent in the mid-1970s to 68 percent in 1979. The loss is especially severe among technically trained personnel; the Navy is short 20,000 petty officers and the Army lacks over 50,000 mid-level sergeants. Retention of flying and submarine officers has become particularly difficult. The higher pay, shorter hours, and better family life provided by most civilian jobs, plus intense recruiting by prospective civilian employers, obviously matter in decisions not to reenlist; but the poor quality of the junior enlisted force plays a key role in the decisions of many careerists to leave the service.

The armed services' recruiting and retention problems occur at a time when operational responsibilities are expanding. This is particularly the case with the conventional components. The importance of NATO—and the growing capabilities of the Warsaw Pact—has been emphasized repeatedly by the Carter administration. The Rapid Deployment Force, parts of which just completed training exercises, is being organized to deal with contingencies in other areas of

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the world. In response to the Iranian and Afghan crises, the Navy has been required to deploy a sizable fleet in the Indian Ocean. Other military units have been diverted to process Cuban refugees. Meeting these expanded commitments will adversely affect the quality of service life and can be expected to worsen retention, especially in the Army and Navy.

But perhaps the major cause of the crisis in the all-volunteer force involves military pay and benefits. The central premise underlying the Gates Commission's recommendation in 1970 to move to an all-volunteer force was that economic incentives could, and should, replace the compulsion of a draft. The commission assumed that pay rates would be revised upward if enough quality volunteers were not attracted to military service. The pay scales proposed by the commission, and adopted with little change by Congress, established recruit pay at a level slightly above the then-prevailing minimum wage. This level proved sufficient to attract volunteers in the early 1970s. But the Ford and Carter administrations proceeded to tie military pay hikes to pay raises in the civil service, which suffers no shortage of applicants. Further, to hold down government spending and to control inflation, pay raises were "capped," i.e., kept below CPI increases. As a result, military pay has lagged badly behind civilian pay since 1972. When computed on an hourly basis, the pay of a new recruit is now about 80 percent of the minimum wage, as compared to 110 percent in 1973. Mid-career NCOs and officers have suffered a 15 percent loss of disposable income over this same period. It is hardly surprising that one of every five enlisted personnel now "moonlights" on a second job.

The military pay system is so complicated that many service personnel do not really know how much they earn. The system also provides an exceptionally large share of compensation in the form of fringe benefits. This has contributed to the strong belief among military personnel that total compensation has not kept pace. Traditional service benefits, such as commissary and post exchange privileges and medical care, have been cut back. Reimbursement for travel and moving expenses is dramatically lower than the rates paid in the private sector. And the single most visible benefit for junior enlisted personnel, educational assistance under the GI Bill, was dropped in January 1977, and replaced by a less advantageous (and exceptionally complicated) contributory scheme. Ironically, the end of the GI Bill came at a time when federal educational assistance was increasing sharply. As much as any single change, ending the GI Bill accounts for the failure to attract a representative segment of white youth into service.

As noted above, high unemployment has contributed to improved recruiting during the early months of 1980. But even if unemployment continues at current levels, the long-term prospects of the all-volunteer force are grim. When the transition to the all-volunteer force began in 1970, the general population contained about 9.5 million 17- to 21-year-old males, the cohort that provides most new recruits. That group increased slowly in size throughout the 1970s, reaching almost 11 million in 1978. The initial success of the all-volunteer force thus occurred during a period of growing manpower availability. But the future is one of shrinking availability of military-age males. From its 1978 high, the 17- to 21-year-old male cohort will decline steadily in size until the mid-1990s, when it will number only about eight million. In addition, the armed forces now face more intense competition from American higher education, which also draws heavily on the same age group. Opening military service to women, which the Defense Department hoped would ease the impending manpower shortage, has helped, but the military services are now finding that women are nearly as difficult to recruit as men.

The shortcomings of the all-volunteer force are on display daily throughout the services. For the most part, military careerists do not accept the conclusions of Defense Department specialists and outside analysts that the all-volunteer force is working. These analysts point out, correctly, that the long-term trend is toward higher pay and benefits and that, in the aggregate, personnel quality is about the same as it was before Vietnam. For them, the glass is half full. But career NCOs and officers serve in units with many marginal soldiers and sailors. For them, the glass is half empty. Their point of reference is the early 1970s, when pay and benefits were noticeably better than today.

Another significant point of difference centers on the strategic implications of the present volunteer force. The flexible response strategy adopted during the Kennedy administration meant the development of conventional forces to serve as a deterrent against non-nuclear aggression. Conventional capabilities would avoid the dilemma of doing nothing or using nuclear weapons, the choices implicit in the massive retaliation strategy of the Eisenhower years. Today's inadequately trained and undermanned conventional force, however, is little different in overall capability than the smaller but better manned force of the 1950s. Moreover, the limitations of the volunteer force are

Summer Schedule:

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intensified by the condition of the reserves: Army reserves, for example, are at only 80 percent strength; personnel quality is substantially lower than in the active Army; and the Individual Ready Reserve, a pool of partially trained replacements, is one-third its size a decade ago. For these reasons, many officers doubt that the existing combination of active and reserve components are adequate for a flexible response strategy. Senior defense civilians, however, have generally ignored the strategic implications of this situation.

Civilian specialists and active officers also have differing perceptions about what, if anything, can and should be done about the all-volunteer force. Department of Defense civilians and political leaders concede that there are difficulties, but continue to argue that marginal changes in pay and benefits can provide the required number of quality volunteers. Most military careerists, however, have given up on that approach. For them, there is only one sensible solution—a return to the draft. The principal alternative to a draft, a national youth service, gets mixed but ultimately unfavorable marks within the military. The general idea is warmly applauded; specific proposals, such as those outlined by Representative Paul McCloskey and the Potomac Institute, are considered impractical because of their high costs. Further, these schemes seem, at bottom, more concerned with the larger national youth problem than with the military's personnel situation.

Meanwhile, the frustration of mid-career and senior officers increases. Secretary Brown, otherwise well regarded by senior officers, has shown little interest in personnel matters. With some exceptions—representatives Robin Beard and Richard White and senators Jackson, Nunn, and Warner—Congress has not been especially interested, and continues to concentrate on hardware over people. But the greatest source of frustration has been President Jimmy Carter. In March 1980, the *Air Force Times* and its sister Army and Navy publications reported that the president had sent Secretary Brown a memo directing a stop to "the constant drumfire of criticism from top military officials" about military pay, retention, and combat readiness. "I want to provide assistance where I can . . . [but] you should assess other factors involved." "When I was in the Navy," the president is reported to have continued, "pay was not a major factor" in deciding whether to stay in service. The president's statement was widely reported throughout the services and taken as clear evidence of how poorly he understood the situation. His recent about-face in support of increased housing and travel allowances, incentive pays, and bonuses (the Nunn-Warner Bill), announced to the crew of the Nimitz on its return from the Indian Ocean, consequently was greeted with skepticism. Skepticism turned to cynicism the following day with the president's vigorous intervention to cut defense funds in the FY 81 budget resolution.

To these civil-military tensions must be added the divisiveness the issue is creating within the services. The junior officers and NCOs who supervise the enlisted ranks clearly are dissatisfied with what they regard as a low quality and undermanned force. Not only do they blame the nation's political leaders for failing to act, but they fault senior officers for not speaking out on the issue. This attitude is strongly evident in the Army and Navy, and is beginning to emerge in some units of the Air Force as well. Senior officers, however, are in a difficult position. Contrary to what many junior officers think, senior officers are deeply concerned about the junior enlisted ranks. But for the most part they are reluctant to challenge openly a policy so strongly supported by civilian political leaders. Their job, most believe, is to report accurately on the capabilities and limitations of the force. Political leaders, in turn, are supposed to address the policy questions of adequacy and recruitment. Senior officers also believe that a forthright public assessment of the situation would hurt morale and effectiveness—like football coaches, they know that telling the team how bad it is will only make it worse. They are caught between critical subordinates and unresponsive superiors.

The reception accorded President Carter's selective service registration proposal, as well as recent opinion surveys, confirms the public's lack of enthusiasm for a return to the draft. Opposition is strongest, of course, among young Americans. Hence, improvements in the military manpower situation can be obtained only by sharply higher pay and benefits. These can be expected to ease service retention problems. They might also, if combined with a meaningful GI educational assistance plan, improve somewhat the quality and representativeness of the force. Finally, the crisis threatened by the shrinking military-age population might be pushed a few years into the future.

Political leaders concerned about defense spending need to recognize that conventional capabilities are most affected by the shortcomings of the all-volunteer force. They also ought to realize that added defense expenditures have a serious social dimension which must be addressed: the difficult personal problems of America's young volunteers. More attentive consideration of the problem by political leaders also would go a long way toward persuading career military people that their legitimate concerns are being addressed. And assuming that higher pay and benefits can delay a more serious crisis, the time made available should be used to discuss better ways of attracting personnel to the military. A return to the draft is not necessarily the answer. But clearly the present approach is failing. A policy that, consciously or through neglect, places the principal risks and burdens of defense on segments of society that have enjoyed few of its benefits is morally indefensible. Moreover, the problem is urgent. As the late 1960s demonstrated, poorly conceived military manpower policies can tear apart a generation.

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Frankfurt and Jamaica

Rainer Werner Fassbinder cascades on. He made his first feature film in 1965, and I've seen 14 that he's made since then, which means that I've missed 21. By far the best of the 14 were *Jail Bait* (1972) and *Effi Briest* (1974), both of which were adaptations—the first from a play by the contemporary Franz Xaver Kroetz, the second from Fontane's famous 19th-century novel. But no Law of Fassbinder can be inferred from this. A Fassbinder adaptation can be tedious (*Despair* from Nabokov); an original script of his can be engrossing (*Ali*); he can direct beautifully a script by others that chews less than it bites off (*The Marriage of Maria Braun*). A new Fassbinder film is, or can be, a new combination of experiences.

The only films he makes that are nearly predictable in quality are those on homosexuality. Fassbinder himself is openly homosexual and thus has more than a caseworker's interest in the subject, but the results so far have been weak: vapidly sentimental (*Fox and His Friends*, with Fassbinder as a homosexual youth misused by rich men) or vacuously pretentious (*The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant*, in which a trite lesbian drama was suffocated in aesthetic velour).

His latest film to be released here (not his most recent) keeps the weakness going. *In a Year of Thirteen Moons* is about a male homosexual after a transsexual operation who now lives as a woman: Erwin, who has an ex-wife and a daughter, has become Elvira and lives with a man. The title refers to the fact that every seven years there's a year with 13 moons, and we're told that such a year is dangerous for people primarily influenced by their emotions. But how many people aren't? Besides, there's no reason to think that Elvira was more stable in other years.

Maybe, after all, there *is* a Law of Fassbinder: when he treats homosexuality, his closeness to the subject damages him, instead of giving him special power. And this apparently applies also to transsexuality, which is surgical confirmation of an attraction to what was originally one's own sex. Once again, in *Thirteen Moons*, Fassbinder loses his humor, his slash against the explicit and drippy (how astringent *Maria Braun* was), his ability to carry his subject past data into metaphor.

Elvira's sufferings, in Frankfurt today, are burdened with both excess and insufficiency. First, as in the worst Tennessee Williams, what is called anguish of the soul is really just frustrated orgasm-hunting. I'm not knocking orgasms; quite the opposite. I'm deploring the residual puritanism that insists on poeticizing horniness. An orgasm is not much of a cure for true loneliness: both sex and the soul are debased by this Williams-Fassbinder lexicon. If there were even some hint that Fassbinder was consciously dealing with people who must aggrandize their needs with rhetoric, the film would be better. But there's no sense of this: Fassbinder's view seems to be Elvira's. A dingy sensual life is asked to serve as a moral arena—and fails.

In his weakened condition—weak in his discriminations—Fassbinder lowers his guard against the cliché and the ridiculous. Is there a more facile film cliché than a sequence in a slaughterhouse to epitomize the disregarded horrors of everyday life? As for the ridiculous: a female prostitute friend, Zora, takes Elvira to a spiritual counselor; and there in a small room, while his boy friend does muscle-building exercises, the counselor prattles loonily to Elvira, who is weeping copiously, as Zora examines her breasts in a mirror. (A cozy domestic interior that S. J. Perelman might have loved.) Or: Elvira, spending the night on the floor of a luxe office, listens and watches sympathetically as a black man comes in, discourses a while, then hangs himself. Or: Elvira herself commits suicide on a bed next to which Zora and a man are sprawled on the floor.

The intent of the story, which I won't synopsize, is presumably to extend and deepen our communions, but in spite of Volker Spengler's good performance as Elvira, it doesn't happen. Just the reverse: the underlying fault of *Thirteen Moons* is its narrowness, its parochialism. *Maria Braun*, for all its postmodernist high-handedness, moved to make its protagonist's life a symbol of West Germany. *Thirteen Moons* stays where it starts, a gallery of eccentrics whose talk and behavior are narcissistic, deluded, essentially petty. Compare this film and Fassbinder's other homosexual films with the great postwar works of art on homosexuality, Genet's novels. Of *The Thief's Journal* Sartre wrote:

> . . . behind the first-degree myths . . . we discover the reflective myths. . . . If you are able to see at the seam the thin line separating the enveloping myth from the enveloped myth, you will discover the truth, which is terrifying.

In *Thirteen Moons* nothing remotely like that happens. It never rises far above the lachrymose and faintly ludicrous; and it's very long.

Films Worth Seeing

Fame. When it sticks to what the title's about, it's good. High School of Performing Arts students in NYC, hot with talent and success drive. Their personal stories are drivel.

My Brilliant Career. Why do they call it a "sleeper"? It's more awake than any other picture around. An Australian girl, c. 1900, opts for a free life.

Norma Rae. Sally Field. A fight to unionize a southern mill. Sally Field.

The Outsider. An American enlists in the IRA today. Ignore the Detroit prologue and epilogue; most of it, in Ireland, is strong.

SK

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But there's one important point to note. Fassbinder not only wrote and directed, which he always does; not only wrote the script, which he often does; not only did the art direction, which he sometimes does; he also did the cinematography, which to my knowledge he's never done before. It's fine. He's prodigious, all right. We won't have to wait long for further proof of it.

I have to go back to *Farrebique* (1947) and *La Terra Trema* (1948) to find antecedents for *Rockers*. In the first, Georges Rouquier used French peasants to reenact incidents of their lives; in the second, Luchino Visconti used Sicilian fisherfolk to enact an invented story about Sicilian fisherfolk. *Rockers* combines the two ideas: some black Jamaicans play themselves but in an invented story. The leading actor, Leroy "Horsemouth" Wallace, is in fact a celebrated drummer in "J. A.," and he does live with Monica "Madgie" Craig, as is shown, and they do have the three children whom we see. But the events of the picture are fictitious.

They include the theft of a motorcycle that Horsemouth needs for his job (an echo of *The Bicycle Thief*), a frustrated love affair, and a grand revenge by a band of poor Jamaicans on a rich crook, their Robin Hood distribution of stuff from the crook's warehouse. But the whole story is built out of, is incidental to, the music of the film, the music of Jamaica, and the domestic recording business that has grown from it. I don't know much about rockers, the latest term for reggae, but I certainly liked listening to *Rockers*. I enjoyed the music, the actors, the whole film more than the only previous Jamaican picture I've seen, *The Harder They Come*, which is ragged, discontinuous, unfocused, and doesn't have as much music. (Incidentally, in both films, which deal with oppression and exploitation, there is not one white face. The moral compass is within a black world.)

Another advantage of *Rockers* over the earlier film is the subtitles, which provide standard English for the almost incomprehensible dialect. *With* the subtitles, the rhythms, the coined words, the changed vowels are fascinating. The music and speech of Jamaica move in beats and emphases that seem to come from a common source. A good deal of this strength, as elsewhere in the world, is the strength of the insulted and injured.

Rockers was written and directed by a Greek-American named Theodoros Bafaloukos. It's his first film, and it shows nice, clean, narrative ability. But he might have shown that with another story. Here Bafaloukos shows something more, something besides his humane response to Jamaicans: the ability to get his actors to "play" even more than to play. He helped them, under their own names and out of their own realities, to use in new ways the imaginations that, most of the time, they use to dignify their poverty.

It's the price they pay for feeling.

Women and Depression

by Maggie Scarf

To be depressed is to be in a state of emotional paralysis, to dare nothing, to try nothing, to freeze. The pain of depression is real—as real as any form of physical pain. Like physical pain, it often will claim a person's whole attention. Guilt, anxiety, irritability, hostility: these are the common ingredients of depression. It is a horrible mixture, and a good deal of evidence has now demonstrated that it is far more common among women than it is among men.

The same results turn up in virtually every study: for every male diagnosed as suffering from depression, there are anywhere from two to six times as many females. The statistics vary according to who is doing the counting and what the criteria are. But the numbers of males and numbers of females are simply never equal.

What can account for such sexually lopsided statistics? My own view, in the wake of intensive interviewing with a wide variety of women, is that it is the female's inherently interpersonal, interdependent, affiliative nature—her affectionateness and orientation toward other people—that underlies her far greater vulnerability. I believe, and much research of the past decade seems to support such a belief, that females are especially involved in the whole matter of "relationships" and that this greater degree of involvement comes into being very early in life—it begins, pretty much, at birth.

As a number of psychological studies have now demonstrated, the human infant comes into the world curiously predisposed to form powerful emotional ties with his or her parents. But female babies seem to be much more responsive to other human beings than are baby boys—and this is true as early as two or three days. Female infants "smile" more, even if reflexively; they are more responsive to the cries of other infants in the nursery, and will cry along with another baby more readily than will newborn boys. Girl babies babble more in response to the sight of a human face. At the age of three months, as one fascinating study indicates, female infants will show great interest in photographs of human faces. Male infants, at three months, of age, couldn't quite discriminate between the photos and simple line drawings (of both normal and distorted faces). All stimuli seemed equally acceptable to the boys; the girls preferred photos of human faces. These and other findings seem to suggest an innately greater level of sociability, attachment to others, interpersonal sensitivity that may, in fact, be part of the female's biological heritage—and that may relate to her eventual caretaker role. Sociability may be an inborn tendency which, in interaction with cultural expectations and social training, encourages women to link their lives to others. However, as psychiatrist Helen Block Lewis observes,

> our society also scorns people who are not self-sufficient and independent of others. Women thus learn early that they should be ashamed of the very set of qualities which are particularly theirs. Ironically, at the same time, they are constantly

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Maggie Scarf is author of *Body, Mind, Behavior* (New Republic Books). This essay is adapted from *Unfinished Business: Pressure Points in the Lives of Women* to be published in August by Doubleday.

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threatened by the prospect that if they are not affectionate enough and as close and loving to others as they ought to be, they will have failed in their own and others' eyes. They are ashamed of themselves if they are close to others and guilty and ashamed of themselves if they are not. . . .

Who can deny that what she says is true? Might one imagine, though, that females who decide to live more like men, with a far higher investment in career and work, will be less vulnerable to depression? Perhaps the increasing liberation of women will, one day, lead to depressive equality, but the evidence now in hand suggests otherwise. One study, carried out in 1957, and another carried out in 1975, were in agreement: housewives did not have more depressive symptoms than working wives. A very recent investigation, carried out under the auspices of the Yale Depression Unit, compared a matching sample of women who worked and traditional home and family women: there were, again, no differences in the numbers of females afflicted. (Revealingly, there was depression among the husbands of the women who worked.) Both groups of women were far more vulnerable than men. So the obvious "sociological" answers to the question, why so much more depression among women? are not obvious at all.

This brings me back to the point I started from: the singular importance of attachment bonds. Women invest themselves so very powerfully in their affectional relationships and derive such a sense of self from these vital emotional connections that their inner selves become intertwined with other selves. This exposes a woman to greater risk of depression, for these bonds become so much a part of her and she experiences them so powerfully that she often responds to their loss, disruption, or disintegration by feeling powerless, humiliated, and helpless to correct the situation. During the course of any life, unfortunately, such losses and disruptions are inevitable—part of growing up, separating, leaving home.

I don't mean to dismiss the role that might be played by genetics in the transmission of a hereditary tendency to develop a depressive disorder. It is true that not everyone responds to losses, disruptions, and setbacks with a depressive reaction. (Granted, many threatening, frightening, and terrible experiences can bring on a depression in even the hardiest human being.) But generally speaking, a serious depression involves an interaction between stress and a person's threshold of vulnerability.

That inborn threshold of vulnerability is clearly different for different individuals. The current genetic evidence clearly shows that in particular types of mood illness a biological "predisposing tendency" to develop a disorder is very high. In manic depressive or "bipolar" disturbance—that is, one involving both euphoria and despair—the part played by inherited tendencies is fairly well established; manic depressive disease is the most "biological" of the illnesses of mood. Interestingly enough, it affects men and women in roughly equal numbers. This is not true of the "unipolar" or "down only" depressions, which afflict women to a far greater degree.

Some experts do claim, nevertheless, that a tendency to develop unipolar depression is also transmitted genetically. Especially, they argue, in the case of recurrent depressions: the very fact that the episodes recur periodically suggests the existence of an underlying, predisposing (perhaps outright precipitating) biological factor. It is this mysterious factor—a deficient enzyme, a malfunctioning neuronal receptor—that is "causing" the depressive episodes, which are unrelated to anything in the person's life. Outbreaks of depression, occurring episodically, point up the existence of a chronic condition—a cerebral chemistry which, so goes the line of reasoning, becomes deranged when the organism is placed in conditions of stress or threat.

It sounds reasonable, and it could be so. But despite a good deal of research the evidence supporting this view has not yet been found. No solid scientific

A VISIT TO THE HILLSTEAD MUSEUM

Seventy years ago James queried where
amid this bland New England purity
the people hid their passion.
Where beneath the immaculate white steeples
in this unconfessing winter light
was what he called the "sensual margin,
overflow and by-play?"
Until he came upon this house,
discovering here a sudden blaze of art.

We, too, coming from the snow,
abruptly saw the Haystack paintings
burning on the wall,—
the miraculous green shadow at the base of one,
another with that unexpected
stroke of mauve among the gold.

Looking then at Degas' pastel
of a woman bending in an iron tub,
whole landscapes of desire and distance
moulded in the contours of her back,
we saw the tints
of light-reflecting water at her feet
so that she seemed like Aphrodite
on a shallow sea at sunrise.

All this gathered.
Afterwards, we two were quiet,
turning less toward each other
than to future work.
But as we drove back,
watching light fade from the whitest fields,
did you know how readily I would,
just that night, have left all work for pleasure,
and have carried all the beauty of that day to you,
and to the body's first and ignorant embrace?

Peter Sacks

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case has been made which demonstrates that there is an inherited, predisposing vulnerability in recurring unipolar depressive illnesses. The evidence for a genetic basis for any form of depression other than manic depressive disturbance has not been established so far.

If, in the case of repeated depressions, the vulnerability isn't demonstrably genetic, where does it come from? No one knows for certain because it's so remarkably difficult to sort out what might be "inborn" in a particular individual from what might be the result of the individual's earliest experiences. And some psychotherapists and researchers argue that much adult depression stems from "nurture" attachment losses (such as the loss of a parent due to death, divorce, abandonment) which occurred when the child was too dependent and immature to cope with events that seemed absolutely overwhelming. Still, pernicious childhood experiences cannot serve to explain the far greater numbers of women who suffer depression in adulthood: men too, one must presume, suffer through similarly difficult and pathology-producing early experiences. Neither, as has been seen, can the case be made for a genetic explanation of the higher rates of depression among women. In the most "biological" of the mood illnesses, i.e., manic depressive disorder, there is no depressive disparity. Male and female rates are the same. In my opinion the real explanations lie in human evolutionary biology. That is, they have to do with the entire matter of mammalian attachment bonding.

As Dr. Gerald Klerman observed in an article written for *Psychology Today*,

> Attachment bonds have been useful, even essential, to the survival and development of our species. They are served by a psychobiological apparatus developed through centuries that we have inherited from our mammalian ancestors, particularly the primates. One interesting aspect of the apparatus is that we resist with great biological force any disruption of attachments. We do not give up our bonding without great psychological and physical anguish. . . .

While this is true, obviously, for both sexes, it is even more powerfully true in the case of the female who, as we have seen, is more "people oriented" from the moment of birth. It may be the case, as some evolutionary theorists have suggested, that certain critically important primate behavior patterns—such as the tendency of the female to form an intense emotional attachment to the offspring—have evolved in much the same fashion as body and brain structures. "Love bonding" among primates may have come into being as a means of coping with a very extended period of infant immaturity. All primates enter existence utterly dependent upon their mothers' care; and certainly the human infant is the most helpless newborn creature in nature. A tendency for the female to value herself in terms of her powerfully loving attachments would, in the primitive environment in which our species evolved (and civilization, remember, accounts for a mere one percent of human evolutionary biology), have had the most practical of biological consequences. This is not the environment of modern life; "dependence" has become something like a dirty word.

Women are, I believe, particularly prone to respond depressively to loss, or threatened loss, of love bonds because they've placed so much more of their inner substance in them. Their "embeddedness" in relationships, as psychoanalysts Carol Gilligan and Malkah Notman note, "leads them to appear, when contrasted with men, more contextual in their sense of self, and more responsive to interpersonal cues."

The outer membrane of the female's psyche is, somehow, more permeable; it is not distinct and delimited from the psyches with which she is emotionally enmeshed. (Males, in contrast, tend to keep "my own self" and others far more clearly separate, and to have greater conflicts about intimacy, i.e., permitting the other in.) The breaking of a love bond feels like death itself to a woman because her entire being has been defined in relation to it. She is then faced with the terrifying question of who she is, and what she is, without it. She is faced with the prospect of living on her own. This is where so much female depression begins. For "aloneness" of this sort is something for which many women are unprepared. So unprepared, in fact, that the woman is often readier to experience deep dismay and disappointment about a close relationship as guilt and anger directed against the self.

If one has been disappointed, then the real causes lie in one's own unacceptability, inferiority, unworthiness, unlovability, and guilt, especially, about underlying anger at the other. Becoming depressed is a way of discharging these negative feelings while leaving the needed emotional bond intact. The

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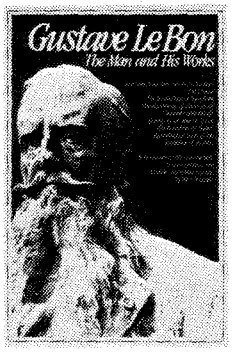

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depressive stance is a waving of the white flag of powerlessness. The bottom line, in the depressed female's contract, is that she will not be abandoned. It is a very bad bargain.

It should be recognized, however, that the woman's struggle to be autonomous probably flies not only in the face of powerful conditioning started in earliest infancy but of biological tendenices as well. For women, the way in which we now lead our lives is, I believe, profoundly antibiological. It is, moreover, nothing that childhood "femininity" training, which encourages being pleasing to others, being loved, being warm and nurturant, etc., prepares a woman for, either. Women, who are taught to set such an enhanced value upon their emotional bonds and who are innately ready to learn to do so, enter the sea of modern adult life in the leakiest of psychological ships. Having learned the important lessons about the vital significance of love bonds, and the ways in which her humanity and her being are to be defined by them, a woman must then make her way through an ocean of uncertainties in which her attachments may not help to keep her afloat. Rupture and disintegration are not exceptions, they are cultural norms. To cite just one of the more daunting statistics: for every three marriages entered into more than one will end in divorce. And the very fact of high geographical mobility, which spells the loss of extended family ties, friendships, and a lack of stable outside supports, must be added to this picture. So must the fact that most women outlive most men by about seven years. So, should a relationship endure throughout a couple's lifetime, the woman—usually a few years younger than her husband—will face a decade of life alone.

At some point in their lives, most women will have to live alone; and most women will have to learn that they can exist even in the absence of a strong emotional bond. They are going to have to learn to survive "aloneness" in the same way that men sometimes have to learn they can exist even in the wake of failure. It will not be easy. Depression among women, given our social climate, is not by any means going to disappear or even diminish. It probably is going to afflict more and more women as the uncertainty of their attachments increases. We are not about to eradicate depressive illnesses from our midst. The best we can do is to survive them.

This involves, in my view, not only getting out of an episode of depression but doing so as quickly as possible. This means, in turn, becoming familiar with the common symptoms (which are, in fact, fairly clear cut) and thinking about what their underlying causes might be. This can involve a process of self-review, or of talking matters over with a trusted friend; and it should involve, surely, seeking treatment if treatment seems necessary. This, however, is more easily said than done.

How many of the women that I've interviewed have acknowledged that they were depressed for many weeks, months, or even years, and knew it, but said: "I felt that I should be able to get under control and to handle this whole thing by myself." Such bravery is misguided, for depressive illnesses can be effectively treated in a variety of ways. The natural history of a depressive attack, from beginning to end, is usually somewhere between four and 12 months. There are treatments available that can bring relief within a few days or in weeks. Depression is a problem that's so widespread that it has been called "the common cold of psychiatric disorders." What must be remembered, in this instance, is that this is a cold for which powerful cures now exist.

There are some behaviorally oriented techniques that attempt to guide the depressed person out of apathy and passivity (the "what's the use of bothering?" stance) and into potentially more rewarding forms of activity, which will, in turn, psychically prepare her to continue behaving in a new way. This effort aims to change the ways a person feels about herself by bringing about changes in the things she does on a daily basis.

Another relatively new psychotherapy of depression, developed by Dr. Aaron T. Beck at the University of Pennsylvania's Mood Clinic, is called Cognitive Therapy. It is based on the theoretical premise that the person who becomes depressed is being victimized by her own thought process. She flagellates herself mercilessly with a relentless stream of self-denigrating, self-diminishing, self-hating thoughts—thoughts which may not even be completely perceived but which lie at the margin of consciousness.

It is the bad thoughts, assert Beck and his colleagues, that create the bad (depressed) feelings. Cognitive therapy involves careful analysis of the person's customary mode of interpreting her world to herself. The treatment interrupts the stream of distortedly negative comments being made to the self by the self and the bad feelings are checked. This form of psychotherapy has had good results, and its effectiveness has been demonstrated in a series of research studies (a rare event in psychotherapy, where the "outcome" isn't usually rigorously assessed).

Still another new and sophisticated form of treatment has been developed by depression researchers Dr. Gerald Klerman and Dr. Myrna Weissman. This is a brief (12 to 16 weeks) therapy called "Interpersonal Psychotherapy." Here the therapeutic procedures are based upon the idea that many, or most, depressions have to do with something going awry in a close relationship. The therapist focuses discussion on a loss or a chronic frustration in an important relationship which he tries to locate in one of four categories. Let me briefly describe these four possible "problem areas."

The first is *Abnormal Grief*, which is to say, unresolved issues and angry feelings that make it impossible for the survivor of a loved person's death to reintegrate her life once again in the wake of the loss of that attachment. *Interpersonal Disputes*, the second category, refers most frequently to role disputes between marital partners. The disputes have to do with who wants what from whom, who isn't getting what she or he feels entitled to get, or even what is needed for emotional survival.

Role Transition, the third designated "loss" area, has to do with a change in status—for example, going from being a married woman to being a single woman, or from wife to widow—where the central difficulty lies in reorganizing the concept of self as one moves from one way of being to another. And the fourth category of possible difficulty, *Interpersonal Deficits*, covers those instances in which a person, confronted with a situation in which she must count on her own resources, becomes depressed in the face of that challenge.

Coming:

Edward Morgan on the American Revolution Remembered.

•

William Maxwell on Alberto Giacometti.

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This is usually the predicament of the young adult who is about to leave home and feels unable to be independent.

In exploring these four regions of pain, the interpersonal psychotherapist sees the depressive episode as something that occurs in a psychological and interpersonal setting, and examines the setting very closely. "Improvement" comes from helping the person to view her situation more realistically and to examine some of the options she may not have been capable of considering. "Curing" may involve restructuring a relationship or getting out of it completely. The entire approach is, it seems to me, a very promising and practical way to deal effectively with the emergence of depressive symptoms—and it is, for obvious reasons, one that I think will be very useful in the brief treatment of depressed women.

The central feature of depressive illness is "anhedonia," the inability to experience pleasure. It is the loss of the capacity to taste one's food, to enjoy one's sexuality, to take an interest in one's activities. It is the loss of that capacity, so taken for granted, to wake up refreshed and restored after a night's normal sleep. The mood itself is a filter of experience, allowing nothing cheerful or gratifying to come through. That filter can be lifted and removed, however—sometimes almost magically—by any one of a number of the very effective drug and/or "talking" therapies now in existence. (*No* treatments for depression existed at the outset of the present century!)

The great point to be made, though, is that chronic dejection and mood disturbance never ought to be accepted as the facts of one's life—as things that just are there and will stay for the foreseeable future because they have to do with "the way that life really is." It isn't, or needn't be. It's a terrible pity that the depressed person can't know that—at least not while she's in the depression—because she's suffering from an illness of the spirit as much as of the body.

The Second Coming
by Walker Percy

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $12.95)

My keen admiration for Walker Percy's fiction always has been menaced around the edges by the fact that in each of his books there are at least three or four occasions when his writing tends to drive me up the wall to one distance or another; in the case of his last novel, *Lancelot*, I stayed up there pretty much throughout. It isn't that Percy ever writes really badly (though he is susceptible to sporadic attacks of damaging influence from Faulkner) but that at certain times he tends to write distractedly, skitteringly, seeming to lose sight momentarily of what he is supposed to be shaping. If the novel is the most open and accommodating of forms, Percy takes every advantage of that, throwing in chunks of perception or observation regardless of what they do to his narratives or characterizations, indulging, at the expense of cohesion and continuity, his prejudices and crotchets.

Another thing he does, as a function of the foregoing and the largest distraction of all, is to get caught up self-consciously in an obsession which might be called meta-societal. At such times one gets a feeling of being lectured at, hectored, or, worse, ushered into a quirky, boring dream. *Lancelot* was, I think, a novel which exhibited almost in its entirety this quality of eccentric, almost crackpot, visionary pursuit; the obsession issued in a plot one couldn't buy, a bizarre, tedious notion rather than a triumphant fictional idea.

What a pleasure it is for me, then, to be able to say that though Percy's new novel, his fifth, is marred in places by lapses of the sorts I've mentioned, it's never seriously endangered by them. *The Second Coming* seems to me his best book since *The Moviegoer* and among the most admirable American novels of the past few years. In its pages the mists do descend from time to time, but they lift quickly and then the writing once again becomes shrewd, lovely, wholly original. What's more, one can see clearly in this book what was to be suspected all along: that in a more intricate way perhaps than for any other American novelist Percy's defects are indeed the excesses or temporary miscalculations of his virtues.

In order to make all this clear I shall have to spend more time than I usually like to on what has to be called a plot summary. *The Second Coming* has two protagonists, a girl in her 20s who has slipped away from a mental institution and, a rather larger figure, a man more than twice her age who becomes her lover. The girl did well at school but has "flunked life," as she says, and her boisterous, well-to-do parents have had her confined to "protect her from herself." The man is an immensely wealthy lawyer who has retired young so as to pursue a "dream of golf and good works" and who suffers, physically, from an epilepsy-like malady which he calls his "petty malls" and, spiritually, from some unknown early trauma. Their movement toward each other, which constitutes the book's chief, subtle, narrative impulsion, is that of outcasts discovering a mate; they have been disqualified, ruled out of the order of things or, especially in the case of the man, to whom most of the book's reflective actions are given, have disqualified themselves.

The man, Will Barrett, is another of Percy's southern heroes of troubled consciousness (all of whom seem to me to be in some rough way literary descendents of Faulkner's Gavin Stevens, although in their case the unease is more metaphysical or spiritual than social). Percy has in fact given him the same name as the protagonist of his earlier novel, *The Last Gentleman*, and there are several other characters from that book in the new one, although Barrett's occupation has been changed from engineer to attorney and the setting from Mississippi to North Carolina.

As the book opens, Barrett's wife, an heiress given to spacious charitable activities, has died after a long illness, and this precipitates a crisis in Barrett's sense of himself and his position in the world. He finds himself inexplicably falling down on the golf course and other places, and though epilepsy is later diagnosed this doesn't eradicate the mysteriousness of the thing. Barrett begins to "see" things, to have memories restored as he lies with his nose in the grass, the chief ones being of a girl he passionately and ineffectually desired in high school and, more important, of a boyhood incident when he was out

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hunting with his father and the latter, strangely, although apparently accidentally, shot himself almost fatally while slightly wounding his son. Barrett's quest for the truth of this event becomes a major component of the plot at the same time as it acts, in the obsessional way I spoke of, to place the book under its principal threat to plausibility.

Under the unresolved pressure of the past, he contemplates shooting himself. It is very strange: here he is, "a talented, agreeable, wealthy man living in as pleasant an environment as one can imagine and yet who is thinking of putting a bullet through his brain." Together with this private malaise is Barrett's sense of a related public one, and it is one of Percy's constant themes. People are generous, they seem content, but everyone is pitched to one extreme and disastrous side or other of what should be the ruling question, that of belief in something other than the self. "People either believe everything or they believe nothing," Barrett muses. For the believers the result is foolishness, gloom, either cold or hysterical churches of every official or invented kind; for the unbelievers it's madness:

> The present-day unbeliever is crazy because he finds himself born into a world of endless wonders, having no notion of how he got here, a world in which he eats, sleeps, shits, fucks, works, grows old, gets sick and dies, and is quite content to have it so. Not once in his entire life does it cross his mind to say to himself that his situation is preposterous, that an explanation is due him and to demand such an explanation and to refuse to play out another act of the farce until an explanation is forthcoming.

Barrett becomes convinced that behind both arid belief and a lunatic unbelief lies a perverse craving for death. "The name of this century is the Century of the Love of Death," he proclaims at one point, but the perception helps him fight the infatuation in himself. In line with this, when he discovers that his father had intended to kill him and then commit suicide (he later did succeed in killing himself) he feels under a curse but the recognition helps steel him to go on.

In a pivotal action of the novel Barrett decides on an experiment. He goes down into a cave where, by waiting for a sign from above which, if not forthcoming, will bring about his death by starvation, he aims "to settle the question of God once and for all." The scheme is absurd, and Percy, its real deviser of course, recognizes this, calling it "outlandish" and making sure it fails, with a huge irony in the denouement which is at the same time a strategic way out toward a truer "answer." The cave episode is the instrumentality of Barrett's union with the girl, to which I will turn shortly.

Now the whole story of the father is unconvincing psychologically (which in literature means it's unconvincing as imaginative creation; Chekhov said that psychological plausibility is the only necessary kind), for nothing is advanced as a motive for his suicide but the quasi-mystical death-love notion, while his attempt to kill young Barrett is explained only as a wish to spare him a life which will lead to death in any case. Stylistically, as one might expect, the sections that deal directly with these matters are precisely where Percy is weakest, where he seems most derivative of Faulkner—"It was the coldness, the hard secret core of himself that he had found"—and, more important, where he succumbs most readily to his perennial temptation toward apocalyptic vision, barely communicable in any of his books and, as before in his work, couched in strained, hard-breathing rhetoric:

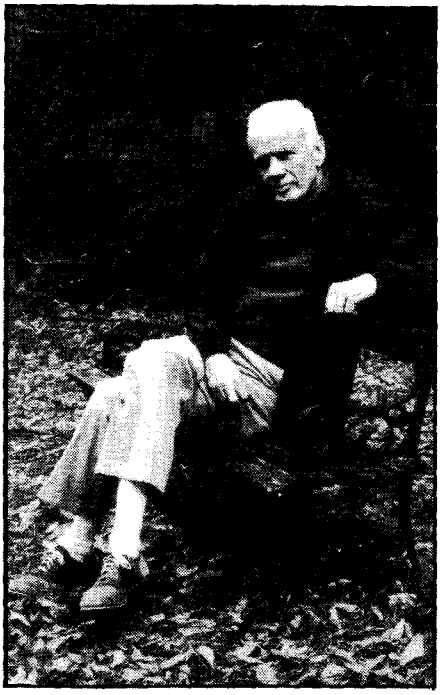

photo of Walker Percy by Evelyn Hofer, courtesy *Esquire*.

> Did you not believe then, old mole, that these two things alone are real, loving and dying, and since one is so much like the other and there is so little of the one, in the end there remained only the other?
>
> Ah, but what if the death is not in the century but in your own genes, that you of all men are a child of the century because you are as death-bound by your own hand as the century is and you of all men should be most at home now, as bred for death as surely as a pointer bitch to point, that death your own death is what you really love and won't be happy till you have, what then?

What Percy does here is to hypostatize death, make it into a rhetorical flourish and means of aggression, and this seems to me a literary vice because it's the offering of an *a priori*—all those fixed connotations, the word assuming that we know exactly what it signifies and will react accordingly—instead of a working out. Still, if I suffered through these passages and others like them, I remained patient for the sake of all the good, sometimes superlative, writing that surrounds them. Some of this writing is a matter of small, even tiny, observation, off-hand, wonderfully precise: "Cars of tourists drove slowly up and down the street. It was the height of the red-leaf season. Some of the cars had four women passengers. A few had five. There were no cars with four or five men." Or: "a tuft of grass with a bare spot behind it shaped like Arkansas." Or: "'Have a nice—' he said, but he turned his face away. 'What' she asked in a very clear question. 'Have a nice what?' But he was gone."

The best writing of all concerns the girl, Allie, in the sequences where she is the major or only character and in those, which make up a good part of the last third of the book, where she and Barrett are together. She is surely Percy's finest female creation and among the best of all. It's a dangerous strategy, making her cut off and a type of drop-out, the victim of shock therapy and partial amnesia; the risks of sentimentality are high, together with those of fashionable counter-culturish typology. But Percy beautifully brings it off.

She has been clinically diagnosed as a psychotic personality, unable to "cope," but her real malady is the blessed one—in Percy's dispensation—of an inability to participate in the world's deceptions and untruths. A holy innocent, she is newly in the world, from scratch, having to learn everything over, and she sets about trying to make a new simple life for herself in an old greenhouse. There Barrett comes upon her and is immediately touched by and drawn to her newness and sanity, the sense she gives of living entirely without guile, of having no notion of guile, so that she is of course immensely vulnerable to the fatal indirections by which society organizes its relations.

The most remarkable thing about her is her speech. Since "she took words seriously to mean more or less what they said, but other people seemed to

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history. And unless his present campaign succeeds, the prince's long-suffering countrymen probably will find themselves forever blocked from hope or respite. Thousands more Cambodians will flee their country. Thousands more will suffer and starve. Thousands more will die. And in the end, those Cambodians who survive will effectively be living in Vietnam.

Sihanouk is campaigning for an international conference on Indochina, to be held in Geneva. (Two similar conferences have been held in the past 25 years.) He wants the nations of the world to declare that Cambodia has no government, that neither the Khmer Rouge guerrillas who brutalized the country for three and a half years nor the Vietnamese conquerors who control Cambodia today are the nation's rightful governors. The prince also suggests that internationally controlled elections be held, allowing Cambodians to choose their own rulers.

If Sihanouk were elected, he says he'd again make Cambodia a neutral nation, the Switzerland of Indochina. That's certainly a worthy aim, but it's almost inconceivable that Sihanouk will complete even the first step toward that goal. For decades, the North Vietnamese have professed to be the rightful rulers of all Indochina. They call this Vietnam's "radiant destiny." The Communists gained control of South Vietnam and Laos. Then finally last year the Vietnamese army easily overran Cambodia. They weren't conquering the nation, they said; they were simply helping the Cambodian people free themselves from the barbarity of the Khmer Rouge.

Today Cambodia is firmly in Vietnam's grip. The puppet government in Phnom Penh might as well be in Hanoi. For Sihanouk's plan to work, Vietnam's leaders would have to give up, voluntarily, the nation they have boasted it is their destiny to rule. The Soviet Union, Vietnam's backer, would also have to agree to relinquish Cambodia—probably to the Khmer Rouge, who are supported by China. That's an unlikely scenario, Sihanouk admits. "The Vietnamese and the Russians would obviously have everything to lose if they went to Geneva," he writes.

Even if Vietnam did pull out of Cambodia, Sihanouk says his nation's plight probably would worsen. Cambodians despise the Vietnamese—they always have—but without Vietnam's presence, Cambodia would most likely fall into the malign hands of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge, who wouldn't have much to gain by going to Geneva either. Sihanouk readily admits that even Vietnamese domination and colonization (most of Phnom Penh's residents already are Vietnamese) is preferable to a return by Pol Pot and his butchers.

Sihanouk was in a unique position to learn just how horrid a fate returning Cambodia to the Khmer Rouge would be. After he was overthrown by General Lon Nol in 1970, the prince threw in his lot with the Khmer Rouge—not so much from shared ideology as from revenge: Sihanouk hated Lon Nol and hoped Pol Pot would defeat him. He urged Cambodians to join Pol Pot's army, and finally in April 1975 the Khmer Rouge marched into Phnom Penh.

Sihanouk seems to subscribe to William Shawcross's theory that America's support of the Lon Nol government assured the Khmer Rouge's success. Shawcross, author of *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*, wrote one of *War and Hope*'s introductions. In it he says that Sihanouk told him privately, "There are only two men who are responsible for the tragedy in Cambodia today: Mr. Nixon and Dr. Kissinger." They "gave the Khmer Rouge involuntary aid because the people had to support the communist patriots against Lon Nol." In *War and Hope*, Sihanouk calls Shawcross "one of the best informed commentators on Cambodia," but otherwise he doesn't directly criticize the United States. The prince now needs American support.

When Lon Nol was finally overthrown, Pol Pot had no more use for Sihanouk. He was held under house arrest in Phnom Penh for three years. While most other members of Cambodia's intelligentsia and ruling class were barbarically tortured and killed, Sihanouk and his family were left alone to wonder which day would be their last. From that vantage point, Sihanouk observed the Khmer Rouge. And now he offers explanations for some of the awful mysteries that have baffled and outraged much of the world: how could Pol Pot's minions brutally and remorselessly murder between two and three million of their countrymen? How could they force the rest of the nation to work in communes every day from dawn to dusk so that many workers died from exhaustion? And how could Pol Pot fail to realize he was guaranteeing his own doom by continually baiting and challenging the Vietnamese?

Early on, Pol Pot recruited impressionable children, Sihanouk explains. He indoctrinated them in brutality, and made them tough soldiers by teaching them to torture and kill helpless jungle animals. Later the young soldiers who guarded Sihanouk and his family in Phnom Penh continued to take "great pleasure in catching mice, shutting them in a cage and setting fire to it. They seemed to love watching the mice run around in circles, desperately and hopelessly looking for a way out, then die in the flames." Since they were given no human victims, "they played this game every day." With that sort of training, the Khmer Rouge soldiers had no trouble disemboweling civilians. Hacking off their heads. Burying them alive. Pol Pot's men did that and more every day. Civilians who weren't murdered were worked, sometimes to death, because Khmer Rouge leaders thought this "would turn [Cambodia] into an 'impregnable fortress' . . . much stronger than Vietnam," a Khmer Rouge leader once told Sihanouk.

And the prince says Pol Pot continually baited the Vietnamese, in print and in almost daily radio harangues, because the Khmer Rouge leader was deluded. He overthrew Lon Nol, who had limited backing from the United States. And Pol Pot considered that victory over Lon Nol's small, ill-equipped army to be a

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victory over the United States as well. He had beaten the world's most powerful nation, he boasted repeatedly; Vietnam was no threat.

"The Khmer Rouge's inflated self-confidence in every domain has always reminded me of Mussolini," Sihanouk writes. "Although the Khmer Rouge leaders had read plenty of books and articles about Mussolini and Hitler, they never considered that they too might suffer similar reversals." But Pol Pot was reversed, and now he and his remaining troops skirmish with the Vietnamese from Cambodia's western mountains. Meanwhile, Khmer Rouge leaders are pleading for support. They say they've reformed. Whatever mistakes the Khmer Rouge may have made in the past ought to be overlooked, Khieu Samphan, the new Khmer Rouge leader, said at a press conference in Peking earlier this year.

Sihanouk is holding press conferences, too, hoping that they and his book will persuade the world to take up his cause. He claims no personal ambition, only a longing to save his nation. Nonetheless, *War and Hope* ends with a detailed analysis of how Sihanouk's new government would be structured. Foremost among the tenets of his fantasy government would be to keep the peace with Vietnam. "No matter how we feel about our neighbors," he says, "we must live next to them until the end of time!"

Joel Brinkley

Joel Brinkley is a reporter for the Louisville *Courier-Journal*. He and photographer Jay Mather won the 1980 Pulitzer Prize for international reporting for their stories and pictures from Cambodia.

The Cult of Violence: Sorel and the Sorelians
by Jack J. Roth

(University of California Press; $25)

In the past 30 years Georges Sorel has ceased to be the neglected and misunderstood thinker he once was. In our own country at least three full-length studies have been devoted to his life and work, plus several major essays and an extremely helpful anthology of his writings. The main lines of his activity are by now familiar; indeed, something of a consensus has emerged on them. He no longer looms on the threshold of 20th-century social thought as an insoluble knot of contradictions.

Born in Normandy in 1847, trained as an engineer—a profession he practiced in the service of the French government for the first two decades of his mature life—Sorel subsequently settled down in the Paris suburbs as a very special type of intellectual. He was self-taught; he was united in a Gallic variety of common-law marriage to an illiterate woman from the working class; he wrote voluminously and chaotically with no regard for sequence or consistency. Sometimes he sounded like a conservative, more often like a revolutionary. Prone to overpowering enthusiasms, he vested his hopes successively in syndicalism, in monarchist nationalism, in Lenin, and (more tentatively) in Mussolini. He died in the summer of 1922, two months before the Italian Fascists' March on Rome.

What students of Sorel agree on as the guiding thread through these shifts of allegiance was his unremitting search for a *ricorso*—for the sort of "rerunning" or renewal of history he had learned about from Giambattista Vico. He was on the lookout for "heroes"—who might appear in the guise of skilled workers, artists, warriors, or even Christian saints—to shake up the "decadent" society he saw around him. In such a quest, he was bound to meet with constant disappointment: his life was punctuated by periods of profound disillusion. Yet he never gave up. His last words, apparently, were: "We must help Russia."

If the exegetes of Sorel's writings concur on the notion of a heroic *ricorso*, whether of the left or of the right, they begin to argue when they come to his significance as a teacher of direct action. On the face of it, the matter would seem to be clear enough. After all, Sorel's best-known work was entitled *Reflections on Violence*, and his literary style was notable for its intemperance. Why not put him down, then, as an "apostle of fanaticism"—to quote the subtitle of one of the standard essays on the subject? Why not situate him at the origin of the politics of hate that rampaged through Europe from 1917 to 1945? To do so, however, is to make him both more and less important than he actually was. It ascribes to him an influence on the course of events that most of the time eluded him, while it relegates to second rank his influence as a social thinker, more particularly—to cite the other tag most frequently associated with his name—as the man who defined the role of "myth" in stimulating mass allegiances. The "violent" interpretation is the older one; it would appear to be the newer also. Up to now, the opposing school of thought (to which I belong) has remained stubbornly unconvinced of its merits. The appearance of still another book on Sorel must inevitably prompt us to reexamine our long-standing assessment.

Jack J. Roth's *The Cult of Violence* proclaims in its very title the side of the argument its author is prepared to defend. Yet it is in no sense a simple-minded reformulation of familiar material. Roth's writing is as nuanced as it is judicious. Above all, he is immensely learned and scrupulous to a fault. His work, the product, apparently, of more than 20 years' labor, draws on an astonishing variety of ephemeral writings scattered among the most obscure periodicals. Dense with names and incidents, it tells us more about Sorel and his disciples than any other single volume: were the term not so patently absurd, this book would deserve to be called "definitive."

More specifically, Roth enlarges our knowledge and understanding at six key points. To begin with, one can find nowhere else so detailed and precise an account of the Sorelians—the motley crew who looked to the eccentric sage as their "master." To help explain those who came from the right, Roth unravels the complexity of Sorel's allegiances. An unbeliever himself, Sorel showed unfailing respect for the Catholic tradition, even going so far as to urge the Church to reject the version of *aggiornamento* (two generations before the fact) that Saint Pius X eventually condemned as "Modernism." In the same vein, Roth brings to the surface the mounting undercurrent of anti-Semitism in Sorel's writings that was to lead him to

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use words as signals in another code . . . " her language, learned afresh after the clouds of therapy and the amnesia, bumps up against the practice of others, is like a wise, shy alien's. "She sounded like a wolf child who had learned to speak from old Victrola records," Barrett thinks. She says things like "I was somewhat suspended above me but I am getting down to me." When they meet again after an absence she tells him "'It's you irregardless of who.' He laughed. 'Irregardless of who what?' 'Of who I thought you were.'"

Their relationship develops swiftly but subtly. She is Barrett's way back to life, while he is the confirmer of her secret strength. They are each other's opportunity. The sequences in the book when they are together are enormously affecting, funny, exhilarating, full of surprise. I don't know of any depiction of sexual love in recent American fiction that surpasses this for simplicity, painful but liberating truthfulness, splendor, and depth of feeling, and I despair of being able to convey this short of quoting whole pages. But here is a little scene that may give something of the writing's flavor. The girl has managed to lift and move an enormous stove by means of a system of ropes and pulleys. Barrett has had one of his attacks. "'Is there something serious wrong with you?'" the girl asks. "'No. Except I tend to fall down.' 'I am a good hoister.' 'I know.' 'When you fall down, I'll pick you up.' 'I know.'"

I don't mean to suggest that the excellences of *The Second Coming* are confined to this relationship. They are spread throughout, although they do indeed culminate in the final section. I spoke before of Percy's vices being the costs of his virtues. What I came to see as I read his new book was that one had to be willing to grant him his excesses and even follies. The point isn't that he could somehow learn to give them up, to write more *acceptably*; he writes as he does and can, and if in order to emerge into the clear tonic air of revelation he has to go through much murk and absurdity, so it must be. Like any novelist he needs plot to frame and impel his sense of things, and because this sense is rarer and more elusive than that of most writers, an awareness of eternity mocked by the here and now yet sustaining it, a religious sense without explicit creed or dogma, his plots have to reach further than most and are subject to afflictions as they go.

I'll therefore amend what I said before: that I simply endured the inferior elements for the sake of the good. What I did was take them up together, knowing I couldn't really separate them, grumbling, exasperated at times, but full, in the end, of praise.

Richard Gilman

Richard Gilman is author, recently, of *Decadence: The Strange Life of an Epithet* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux).

The African Condition
by Ali A. Mazrui

(Cambridge University Press; $17.50, $5.95 paper)

The author of this book, who was born in Kenya and now teaches at the University of Michigan, is a well-known scholar and writer on African affairs, from whom in the past I have learned a great deal. He is also a very angry man, and in the present book the angry man prevails over the scholar. What I have learned from it I would on the whole prefer to forget, and I shall try to explain why.

Like most blacks, Professor Mazrui is angry at racial discrimination in general and at his own racialist humiliations in the United States and elsewhere. He is angry also at the weakness of Africa and at the appalling poverty of most Africans. This is understandable enough. The real question is whether anger is a help or a hindrance in understanding "Africa's aches and pains" and "the fundamental paradoxes of the African predicament." I must conclude, reluctantly and regretfully, that all it does is muddy the waters. If it is really representative of African thinking—or, it would be more correct to say, of African emotions—this is a profoundly disturbing book.

Not, of course, that the questions Professor Mazrui raises are not pertinent. It is his answers—and more particularly the assumptions behind his answers—that disturb me. Africa, he says, is "one of the best endowed regions in the world," and yet it is "marginal in influence and power within the global system." What, he then asks, "are the causes of this marginality? And can the marginality be transcended?"

This, with many elaborations, is the central theme of Professor Mazrui's book, and the most striking thing about it is its almost obsessive preoccupation with power. It runs through the book like a red thread until, in the last chapter, as anger takes over from reason, it results in a tirade of shrill ranting irrationality which reminds me uncomfortably not perhaps of Hitler but of those nationalist German professors who preceded and heralded Hitler.

For what, in the end, is Professor Mazrui's prescription for Africa? The answer—if (charitably) we ignore his fantasy of a "strange alliance" between "the military ambitions of the Third World" and "women's liberation"—is bombs, and with bombs a revival of Africa's "warrior tradition" (destroyed, predictably enough, by Christianity, which "imperialism" used to "emasculate" African societies). It is like asking England to save itself by going back to the ethos of Beowulf, though even Mrs. Thatcher has not proposed that remedy—yet.

This is Professor Mazrui's vision of the future, and it is a horrifying and alarming one. Africa must get into "the game of proliferation." The leading African states, Nigeria, Zaire (an unlikely candidate if ever there was one), and South Africa when it becomes "black-ruled" (which he is sure will be the day after tomorrow), must acquire nuclear weapons. Only then "will the superpowers be converted to total military denuclearization." And in addition "the nuclearization of the warrior tradition would imply a reassertion of adulthood"—to say nothing of masculinity—"in the Third World."

All this, it is hardly necessary to say, is nonsense, and pernicious nonsense at that. Does anyone, outside the Pentagon and other institutions for the mentally retarded, any longer believe the myth, so dear to the generation before World War I, that the proliferation of weapons, nuclear or conventional, is the best way to ensure peace? But more pertinent is the fact that nuclear weapons are totally

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irrelevant to Africa's needs. If Africa is going to "catch up" (and that in the end is what Professor Mazrui wants), its first necessity is roads, not atom bombs. Go to Namibia—or, failing that, look at a photograph of its thousands of square miles of unexplored and unopened country—and you will see why Africa is still the backward continent. All the bombs in the world will not alter that.

The causes of African backwardness are many, and in the earlier part of his book, before he gets carried away by indignation, Professor Mazrui deals with them fairly enough. He does not hide the fact that Africans themselves are responsible, in part at least, for their predicaments. He writes of their "corruption" and of their "staggering" level of "organizational incompetence." He knows also that they have been content to maintain and exploit the colonial political and administrative structure, with all its defects, instead of replacing it by a new structure better adapted to Africa's needs.

But, having made these admissions, he dismisses them as something that "may need a long period of social reform." Might it not be more true, on the contrary, to say that they are a major cause of African backwardness, requiring immediate attention? Instead, and characteristically, Professor Mazrui asks: "What did all this have to do with the influx of white men from outside?" The answer, it seems, is everything. Professor Mazrui rightly makes fun of the fable that Africa was a Garden of Eden before the whites appeared. But the upshot of his account is not very different.

The result is what I can only call a sort of inverted racialism. Whites are, for Professor Mazrui, what whites, until they were taught better, used to call the nigger in the woodpile. Africa's problem is colonialism, or the hangover of colonialism. It is not untrue, but it is a terrible simplification, and Professor Mazrui, I am sorry to have to say, is one of the *terribles simplificateurs* against whom Burckhardt warned us more than a century ago.

That is why I find this, as I have said, a profoundly disturbing book. I began it with high hopes and expectations. I finished it with something like gloom and despondency. Gloom and despondency because, if Professor Mazrui really speaks for Africa and Africans, it bodes ill for the closing years of what, all in all, has been a bloody, violent, and unhappy century. The last thing we need, at this fateful juncture in history, is more nuclear weapons a recrudescence of the "warrior tradition" so dear to the imperialists who invaded Africa a century ago, and a revival of the racialism, of which (I would have thought) the world had its fill from 1939 to 1945.

It is also the last thing Africa needs. Africa's real problems today are what Professor Mazrui calls "retardation" and "fragmentation," and he has a good deal to say about both. Unfortunately, owing to his preoccupation with power, he nowhere, so far as I can see, comes to grips with the stubborn problems of practical politics that they involve. This seems to me like putting the cart before the horse. In today's world, military potential is a corollary of economic potential. If Africa puts its economic house in order, "leverage in the world system" will follow automatically; until it has done so, its chances of getting out of "political and military marginality" are small.

And, finally, this is something only Africans themselves can do. No African is likely to forget the injuries black people have suffered at the hands of white people, but nothing is gained in practical terms by blaming Africa's present-day predicaments on "the legacy of Africa's humiliation across the centuries." It may or may not be true that "a substantial part of the explanation" for Africa's backwardness "lies in the nature of its economic interaction with the western world across time." This is an interesting historical question, but at best it is irrelevant in terms of the present and at worst it is calculated to foster a racial antagonism that is likely to be counterproductive.

No one can expunge—or would want to expunge—the race question from the African record. It is part of the African reality. But it is only one part, and it is no service to Africans to put all the emphasis, as Professor Mazrui seems to me to do, on Africa's grievances against the white world. Paradoxically, one consequence—unintended, no doubt, but very important in the long run—of the long, drawn-out racial conflict in Africa has been to deflect black Africans from seriously confronting their own insistent problems. It is easier to line up against Portugal and white Rhodesia than to tackle the anomalies, and often iniquities—to say nothing of the economic absurdities—of black Africa's political divisions. In saying this, I hope I shall not be accused of hostility, or even indifference. Like Professor Mazrui, I believe the balance will shift in Africa's favor over the next 20 years. But it will not do so unless, after the conflict with white South Africa is settled—and this, I agree with Professor Mazrui, is bound to lead to another wave of violence—Africans set to, with determination, to put their house in order. I am not sure that they will—any more than I am sure that Americans will, or that the British will—but their future, today, is in their own hands.

Geoffrey Barraclough

Geoffrey Barraclough is professor of history at Brandeis University and author of *Turning Points of World History* (Thames & Hudson).

War and Hope: The Case for Cambodia by Prince Norodom Sihanouk

(Pantheon Books; $10.95)

It takes no special political wisdom to see that Prince Norodom Sihanouk is pleading a nearly hopeless cause. He admits it. In fact he carefully explains why his plan to save Cambodia can't possibly succeed. Sihanouk, though, has spent much of his life pursuing a cause whose odds for success were at best discouraging. As the ruler of a nation that tried to remain independent while bordering an expansionist Vietnam, he was guaranteed an unending struggle. Nonetheless, for 30 years Sihanouk managed to keep Vietnam at bay. Today, living in exile, and with 150,000 Vietnamese troops occupying his nation, Sihanouk is in the midst of his most difficult and desperate struggle.

"Cambodia's last chance is Norodom Sihanouk," he declares unabashedly. No one has ever accused the prince of undue modesty, but this time he may be correct. Sihanouk has been the most enduring figure in his nation's recent

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repudiate his earlier support of Captain Dreyfus. With these two considerations in mind, we are in a much better position than before to appreciate why so many of the Sorelians ended up as Fascists. Correspondingly, on the left, Roth documents the abiding impression made on someone who recognized as his true "masters" only Lenin and Croce: by way of Antonio Gramsci, we now realize, Sorel contributed in his own peculiar way to the "Western" Marxism of today. Lenin, of course, along with Mussolini, was to incarnate the magical quality of leadership that Max Weber had just christened "charisma"; the fifth of the benefits Roth brings us is his demonstration of how Sorel came increasingly to stress this quality as indispensable to the *ricorso* he yearned for.

Finally, and most generally, Roth enables us to view Sorel as both "observer" and "partisan," as a man whose "purpose was to reveal to the militants their historic mission." Here at last we reach the central question of violence. A stern moralist, Sorel enjoyed pointing out the path of duty to men whose temperaments inclined them toward violent courses; for himself, he remained a man of words and books. Still more, as Roth knows better than anyone else, it frequently was hard to detect when he was actually inciting to violence and when he was merely analyzing it. On this crucial distinction, the light Roth sheds begins to grow fitful.

Nor is his work of clarification furthered by the way in which he has organized his book. The bulk of it consists of four sections devoted to the successive movements Sorel diagnosed or celebrated—revolutionary syndicalism, integral nationalism, bolshevism, and fascism—with each subdivided in identical fashion as a triad of chapters on The Man, The Idea, and The Impact. This rather mechanical procedure offers one distinct advantage: it establishes two sets of pairs—one left, one right, in each case—which in Sorel's mind evidently figured as "alternatives": he "could conceivably be enthusiastic about either *ricorso* or even about both." But to organize matters this way is to endow them with a misleading symmetry. It suggests to the unwary or hasty reader an equivalance that simply was not there. Whatever criterion one applies—whether activist or theoretical—the initial phase must rank first in importance also: as Roth himself tells us more than once, revolutionary syndicalism remained Sorel's "first love"; the single year 1908, in which this infatuation reached its height, saw the appearance not only of *Reflections on Violence* but of two additional books of nearly equal originality and power. In contrast, when in the following year he began his coy flirtation with integral nationalism, "he appeared uncomfortable with his new associates and apologetic about his new orientation."

But there is a further and more serious disadvantage to Roth's symmetrical arrangement. By providing no slot for a sustained discussion of Sorel's abiding relevance as a social theorist, it tilts the data toward delineating him as the progenitor of violent direct action. By the same token it inflates the importance of the "Sorelians." Roth grants that they remained "marginal to the main revolutionary currents," "outsiders among outsiders," that "the Sorelian movement . . . failed to extend itself much beyond the generation that had known Sorel personally," and that this movement was confined to France and Italy. He does not go on to make the logical further observation that Sorel's writings never caught on in the two countries—Germany and the Soviet Union—where 20th-century violence was to attain its maximum brutality. To my mind, Roth takes his protagonist too literally. "With the news of actual bloodshed," he notes, Sorel became "withdrawn and troubled." But once again he fails to draw the implications of what he has just told us. As I see it, Sorel belongs to a category of thinkers—we may recall instructive examples from the late 1960s—who pontificate about violence in the abstract without ever having experienced it first hand; gentle creatures in their personal lives, they recoil in horror when faced with the reality. Fortunately or unfortunately as the case may be, Sorel never went through the shattering experience of seeing his dreams come true.

For those who think as I do, "our" Sorel, despite Roth's book, doubtless will remain the penetrating amateur psychologist of mass movements, the man who recast Marxism as "social poetry," the inspired discoverer of the social myth. This is not to say that Roth is mistaken—far from it. He knows more about the subject than I shall ever know. It is simply to conclude, in the spirit of Sorel himself, that there is room for alternative hypotheses, and that to stick to one of them does not require us to disparage the other.

H. Stuart Hughes

H. Stuart Hughes is professor of history at the University of California, San Diego, and author of *Consciousness and Society* (Random House) and *The Sea Change: The Migration of Social Thought 1930-1965* (Harper & Row).

Coming:

R.W.B. Lewis on V.S. Pritchett.

Brief Review

Unsettling Europe
by Jane Kramer
(Random House; $9.95)

Mario and Anna Cecchi argue frequently about their refrigerator. Mario, the ideologist, says the refrigerator is one of the blessings brought to poor Italians by the Communist party. Anna, the realist, points out that they paid for the refrigerator themselves, and that the jobs and loans the party gives to some people only deprive others. Mario and Anna used to be outcasts because of their leftist politics. Now that the Communist party has secured its own niche in the Italian government, it too has no use for old-time members like Mario Cecchi, still meeting in cells and trying to apply communist doctrine to village life.

Although they are distrusted by the old Catholic establishment and shunted aside by their own party, the Cecchis are fortunate compared to the other three families whose intimate portraits Jane Kramer draws in this moving book. The Cecchis, after all, are at home in their own village, known, if not entirely accepted, by their neighbors. The Ilićs, Hassans, and Martins are foreigners, though they do not all consider themselves as such. The Ilićs are Yugoslav workers in Sweden, there just until they can garner enough money to build a house back home—a time that fades further and further into the future; the Hassans are Asians, thrown out of the Uganda they were sent to settle by the British, who assumed—wrongly, they discover—that they were welcome to move to London; the

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Martins are French (Pieds Noirs) who fled the terrors of war in Algeria to seek refuge in the land of their parents.

In four essays written for the *New Yorker* between 1971 and 1979, Jane Kramer describes in rich detail the histories and present straits of these families. Rather than summarize the horrors her subjects have lived through or the isolation they now endure in a society indifferent to them, Kramer matter-of-factly presents their reactions. Akbar Hassan's daughter Zhora, for example, blames her strict Moslem father for inhibiting her social life when in fact none of her British or other Asian classmates have so much as invited her to visit them. And young Yvette Martin, accustomed to shooting and bloodshed in Algeria, broke out in hives during her first days in France, unnerved by the calm.

Kramer widens her focus to show the larger social and political picture of some 10 million foreigners struggling, mostly unsuccessfully, to settle down in their new lives in industrial Western Europe, but she never allows herself—or us—to view these families as mere representatives of the group in question. These people see themselves not as one large immigrant community, but as many factions. Moslems don't trust Sikhs; Serbs won't associate with Croatians. Living in a strange land deepens rather than lessens the traditional divisions. Being treated as second-class citizens brings out these people's pride, makes them suspicious, causes them to exaggerate social slights until they become as closed to each other as the natives of their new lands are to them.

Jane Kramer shows us a Europe tourists never see. The people she describes often speak a different language from their new countrymen; they live in ugly, sterile no-man's-lands outside the hearts of the cities; they work in the most marginal jobs in factories or as domestics. But they are no less a real part of Europe for all that—a part Jane Kramer has brought powerfully to our attention.

Lisa Derman

Correspondence, *from page 5*

What bothers me more than the Reaganesque Red-baiting of these letters is that each contains a jab at Harvard (where Womack teaches) and, more broadly, at the supposedly cushy life and consequent irresponsible idealism of the professional scholar. What is it that provokes in apparently literate people this perennial and rather nasty set of responses to the professorial calling? Is it jealousy? Politics? Or just good old American anti-intellectualism, of which so many of my countrymen are inordinately and inexplicably proud?

Mina J. Carson
Resident Tutor in History
Harvard University
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Montreal Diarist

Violent Arts

It probably has not escaped the notice of careful readers that *TNR* is badly deficient in coverage of professional boxing. Why a magazine ostensibly devoted to politics and the arts would ignore the manly art of self-defense is a mystery to me. The *New Yorker* of 20 years ago, after all, regularly published articles on boxing by A. J. Liebling. If there are any boxing aficionados among our readership, they will be cheered to know that *TNR* was well represented among the members of the press attending last week's "la face à face historique" between Sugar Ray Leonard and Roberto Duran in Montreal. To be honest, my editors were in no way responsible for my attendance. For that matter, they probably were unaware that the world welterweight championship would be contested on June 20, at least until I informed them. (Such ignorance is part of an editor's otherworldly charm.) But I was there nonetheless, having managed to persuade the editors of another publication to allow me to go as their representative. So for a couple of days I got to impersonate a sportswriter, though lacking a thick cigar and a loud plaid jacket I probably wasn't very convincing. I found my colleagues to be obstinately uninterested in the type of questions that occur naturally to a member of *TNR*'s editorial staff: What are the economic consequences of government regulation of prize fighting? What does Ronald Reagan think of the US losing not only a canal but a coveted boxing championship to Panama?

I'm aware that not everyone shares my fascination with the sport. Boxing has more than its share of critics, including the resident pacifist and vegetarian of the *Washington Post*, columnist Colman McCarthy. In a recent column he called boxing "attempted homicide made legal." McCarthy, let the record note, is a running nut, and news of joggers dropping dead midway through their morning jaunts has never provoked him to call his sport "attempted suicide made legal." But never mind that. McCarthy says his "disgust is less in the actual gore of fighting than in the media's cheery pretense that, first, these [boxers] are athletes, and, second, that courage is involved." He says the "least-examined aspect of boxing" is the "absence of conscientious and dedicated training—the essence of athletics." I always thought the essence of athletics was performance in competition, but let's forget that too. McCarthy bases his argument on the common knowledge that most boxers train only for specific fights and take it easy when none is imminent. "The truest sense of conditioning is found only in authentic athletes," he declares, citing the training methods of distance runners, who he says train year-round. By this unusual definition, the only real athletes would be marathoners. Those alleged athletes who don't train year-round, which includes baseball, football, basketball, and hockey players, would be lumped with other non-athletic competitors in games like Chinese checkers and mumblety-peg. As it happens, most professional boxers do train more or less all the time, since few can afford the luxury of long vacations between fights. McCarthy obviously never has sampled his local gym's training regimen, else he wouldn't disparage the conditioning of boxers, who probably are trained more rigorously and thoroughly than any other athletes. His accusation that boxing requires no courage makes even less sense. "Courage?" he asks rhetorically. "If any courage can be found in the repeated acts of striking another man's brains or kidneys it comes only in the most perverse way: the willingness to live bravely with the reality that another person's death may be on your conscience." Well, I've never heard anyone say it took bravery simply to hit someone. The bravery comes with the knowledge that he will hit back. McCarthy certainly can't be expected to climb into the ring with a professional boxer to prove how little courage and training are needed. But if he wants an idea of what boxing requires of its participants, let him try running a marathon with a Doberman Pinscher chasing him.

Boxing aside, Montreal is an interesting city, particularly to someone like me whose ventures abroad have been limited to brief excursions to Juarez and Nuevo Laredo, just across the border from my native state. I was warned that most of its residents are French-speaking (I speak only one language, a Texas dialect of English), but I wasn't prepared for everything—menus, billboards, street names—being in French. One almost never hears natives conversing in English, and it is a rare Québecois who can (or will) give directions to someone asking in English. From all outward evidence, one would have expected the May referendum on separation to win approval: there are lots of cars bearing "Oui" bumper stickers, and none expressing the contrary sentiment. The graffiti referendum goes the same way. Roberto Duran even got a deafening ovation when his handlers unfurled a large Quebec flag upon his arrival in the ring. One of my press colleagues remarked to me that "Montreal is such an elegant city." I thought about that for a while and it occurred to me that it probably only seems that way because of the French flavor. The people I heard talking on the subway were probably no less stupid and ignorant than the Washington lawyers I hear on the Washington subway. But it's hard to sound stupid and ignorant speaking French, especially to someone who doesn't know a word of it.

All in all, my visit to Montreal was almost like being in another country. There are times, of course, when one can forget that Canada isn't part of the US. Watching television, for example. I turned it on when I arrived in my hotel room late one evening, curious about the late-night offerings in Canada. I was greeted by Ed McMahon's belly laugh. Even the programs on the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Company) were indistinguishable from American ones, and the commercials no less elevated. One thing that surprised me is that all the television newsmen talk the same as those in the US. Somewhere I got the idea that most Canadians have British accents (remember Hayley Mills?), but in two days I didn't hear a single one. It didn't take much of this to start me feeling guilty about American cultural imperialism. Then it occurred to me that my ignorance of Canadian history might have caused me to get things backward. What if it was the Canadians who first dreamed up late-night talk shows, newsmen who sound like they're from nowhere, and inane commercials? What if they're the ones who are taking us over? Will our children grow up speaking French and cultivating rudeness to those burdened with barbarous tongues? The prospect is ominous.

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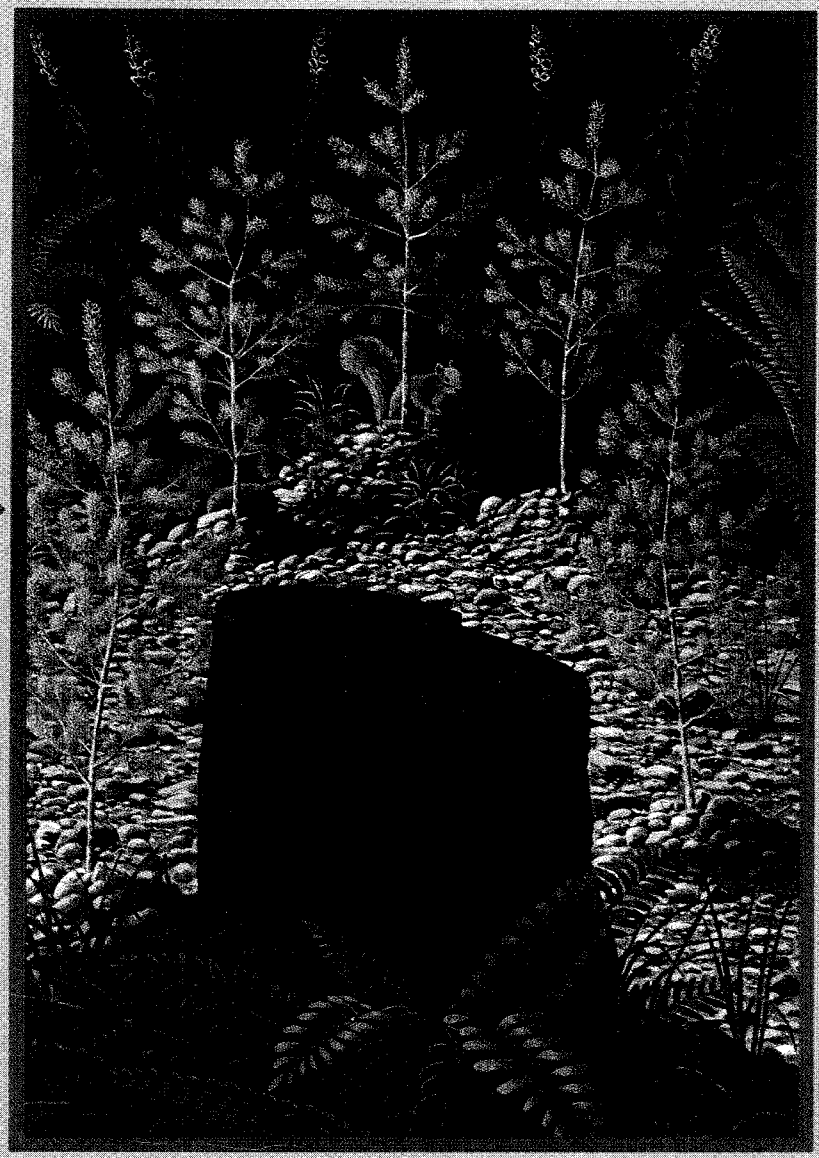

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